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# The Camelot Classics.

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IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.



# IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

BY

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE

BY

HAVELOCK ELLIS.



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## LANDOR.

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**L**ANDOR will always be a great figure in English literature. His is an Olympian form, like Milton's, solitary, it is true, but he stands on "the far eastern uplands," fairly beyond the ebb and flow of time. Born into the midst of the second flowering-time of our national literary energy,\* Landor was isolated from the first by the necessity of his own proud and imperious temperament. During a period of literary activity extending over seventy years, he slowly built up the life-work that now finds a more or less inaccessible home in the stately volumes of Forster's final edition. He was a poet embodying revolutionary aspirations in classic and concrete language ; he was a critic in the largest sense, a critic of life and of the human spirit as it is expressed in literature, a patient and unwearied critic of language ; above all, he was what we may for the moment, for want of a better term, consent to call him with

\* Wordsworth, Scott, Coleridge, Southey, Lamb, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt and De Quincey were all born during the years between 1770 and 1785. During the same period Chatterton, Gray, Goldsmith and Johnson died. Byron, Shelley, Carlyle and Keats were born a few years later.

Browning, "a great dramatic poet." His *Examination of William Shakspeare* for deer-stealing is marked by its individual power and solemn deliberate humour ; in the *Pentameron* Boccaccio and Petrarch discourse together in delightful old-world fashion ; *Pericles and Aspasia* is full of glimpses of Greek life mingled with Landorian wisdom. But it is in the *Imaginary Conversations*, elaborated during the thirty most mature years of his life, that Landor has given us most of himself. As was said many years ago, a well-edited selection of the *Conversations* would be "one of the most beautiful books in the language—that is to say, in the world."

In these *Conversations* a great procession of noble and gracious forms, of olden times and of a later day, pass sweetly or sadly before us. Hannibal supports the dying body of his enemy Marcellus, and exclaims—"What else has the world in it?" Chaucer and Boccaccio dine together at the house of Messer Francesco Petrarca, and tell each other stories in the manner of old time ; large wise sayings mixed with kisses fall from the lips of Epicurus as he talks philosophy with his girl-pupils in the garden outside Athens ; Garibaldi and Mazzini laugh sadly together over "French honour, French veracity ;" the dignified Bossuet respectfully advances to hear the confession of his king's volatile young mistress ; Cicero and his brother discourse together in lofty Ciceronian ways of life and death and fame ; Leonora di Este implores her imprisoned lover Tasso to forget her, and dies with a happy smile, receiving the assurance that he can never forget ; Montaigne in his wise and genial way laughs quietly at the stiff and learned Scaliger ; Ascham warns his young pupil Lady Jane Grey of the perils of greatness ; Pericles leads Sophocles through the Athens that he has adorned, and delights more than all in the voices that praise him for his friends' sake ; Leofric rides into Coventry with his young bride Godiva, so resolute to save the city ; Joan of Arc strives to stir Agnes Sorel's weak heart to heroism ; Washington and Franklin discourse of the free spirit of New England ; the Empress Catharine stands outside the door, hears the dogs lapping her murdered husband's blood, and seeks to justify



herself ; Sir Philip Sidney and Greville talk of poetry amid the woods of Penshurst ; Beatrice receives her lover's last kiss with "Dante ! Dante ! they make the heart sad after"—such are the forms—and how many more !—that Landor with his unfailing instinct for what is heroic or tender has brought before us in these *Imaginary Conversations*.

It is only in the shorter dialogues that Landor can be called "a great dramatic poet." In these he sometimes brings before us some group wrought of molten musical language at its highest tension, on some height of passionate emotion, which has the concentrated energy of bronze cast in the fire. This is static drama, observe, not dynamic ; that is to say, there is no progress, no development ; to appreciate these dramatic dialogues the reader must be in the same emotional attitude at the beginning as at the end. It has been acutely said by an American critic of Landor's short poems that they are cameos, addressing themselves no less to the eye than to the ear, and the same must be said of these dramatic groups. It will be seen that there are narrow limits to Landor's dramatic method, and even his dramatic vision seems to be of not very wide extent. It has often been said that he rises with the dignity of his subject, and this is certainly true. He is of the gods and dwells on the top of Olympus ; it is only when mortals have ascended far up the slopes, at the rarest moments of tragic passion, that Landor appears to look on them eye to eye. Of ordinary humanity he knows little. Mr. Colvin, indeed, distinctly his best critic, has attempted to vindicate for Landor a large field ; he considers that only Shakspeare, and scarcely he, has surpassed Landor in the delineation of women. This, surely, is an extravagant judgment. Tender and noble figures they often are, but even at the best seldom more than the personification of boundless resignation or self-sacrifice. He looks at them generally from the outside and as a painter, not dramatically from the inside. He describes them as objects of love, but they possess scarcely the most elementary capacity of response to love. Even Beatrice says to Dante, whose head rests against her bosom, "I will never be fond of you again, if

you are so violent." In ordinary human relationships they generally comport themselves, as Mr. Colvin admits, in a manner "giggly, missish, and disconcerting"—surely a terrible indictment. Landor belongs, indeed, as a dramatist, not to the school of Shakspeare (in his most characteristic aspects), but rather to that of Beaumont and Fletcher or Ford ; that is to say, the loveliness or pity of the scene lies not so much in the make of the character as in the tragic height to which the character is lifted. In the best works of the greatest dramatic artists—those who have possessed what Mr. Theodore Watts calls "absolute vision"—Shakspeare, Flaubert, George Eliot, Beyle, Charlotte and Emily Brontë—we are conscious of solid, vital, complex personalities, thrilling with warm blood, recognisable in their least words and acts, and we are conscious of nothing of this in Landor's sublime or pathetic images. Few indeed are the real organic personalities, outside himself, whom Landor has revealed ; his Filippo Lippi is a far less vivid and powerful portrait than that which Browning has produced under more difficult conditions ; his Mary of Scotland (in what is, however, an excellent dialogue), saying to Bothwell during the memorable ride, "But you really are a very, very wicked man indeed," is a colourless school-girl beside that brilliant Mary whom Swinburne has discovered or created. When we turn to the longer *Conversations*, which are of a more reflective or argumentative character, the dramatic element becomes still fainter ; Landor has infused into his heroes his own large nature, and notwithstanding all warning to the contrary, we hear throughout these *Conversations*, from beneath some thin mask, Cicero, Epicurus, Diogenes, Lucian—and the marvel is that the masks should suit the voice so well—the great voice, solemn, flexible, harmonious, of

"That deep-mouthed Boeotian Savage Landor."

If this is so, if the inner individuality of the writer is here revealed, if in these sculptured groups,

"Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe,  
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse,"

the red wine is of Landor's own heart, we cannot better prepare ourselves for reading the *Conversations* then by trying to realise what manner of man he was. Born in 1775 at Warwick, in the heart of England, in the county of Shakspeare and George Eliot, he came of two old English families long settled in that land, and he was always proud of being an Englishman—very proud of being an “English gentleman.” \* His father, who had at one time practised as a physician, belonged to a family that could be traced back, as Landor thought, for seven hundred years, and he flattered both his republican and aristocratic prejudices by thinking that on his mother's side he was descended from a certain Savage who had resisted the royal prerogatives of Henry IV. Landor entered life with the gifts of good fortune, a fine physical constitution and an ample estate. As a boy, he was fond both of books and of games (though now and ever he was awkward) ; at an early age he was among the best Latin scholars. We see in him the legitimate but rare outcome of that merely classical and literary education which, until a very recent period, when a breath of new life stirred it, ruled in England from medieval times.

“In those pale olive grounds all voices cease,  
And from afar dust fills the paths of Greece.”

But this imaginative Rugby boy had genius ; he himself brought life which made the old classic times alive ; and he wandered along the brook-side and dreamed old heroic dreams. At the same time his audacity, his fierce independence and impetuosity also developed. He was skilful in fishing with a net, and one

\* The best general account of Landor's life and work is Mr. Colvin's admirable little book in the *Men of Letters* series. No one who cares for Landor can refer without gratitude to the same writer's anthology from Landor's works in the *Golden Treasury* series. It is attempted in the present volume to approach Landor in another way, by presenting a representative selection of *Conversations* (excluding a minority not yet out of copyright), either in an unmutilated form or with omissions which are for the most part unimportant.

day caught and held captive a farmer who dared to interfere with his pastime. In after days he related that he had been accustomed as a boy to walk in the rain with his hat off; but when he read that Bacon had done so he immediately dropped the habit. At his father's table once when a bishop had remarked, "We do not think much of Porson's scholarship at Cambridge," young Landor said contemptuously, "*We*, my Lord?" At the age of sixteen his Rugby career suddenly ended in consequence of a fierce quarrel with the head-master (in which Landor was originally right) over a Latin quantity. A year or two later he went into residence at Trinity College, Oxford, but one day, by way of practical joke, he sent a charge of shot into the shutters of a Tory undergraduate, and therewith his university career terminated.

In the meanwhile he was attaining a deeper insight into Greek and Roman literature, and had also fallen under the influence of some of the moderns, especially Milton, whom he then and ever after revered both as a great poet and a great republican. At this time also began the long series of tender friendships which he formed with girls—at this time girls of his own age. Ianthe, as he called her, was one of the earliest, and she conceived an ardent affection for this lovable untamed youth. Fifty years later it was one of Landor's greatest consolations to live near the Countess de Molandé, as Ianthe had become. Many of his finest song-cameos are addressed to her ("And much she cared for them!" he growled once in the last days).

"Well I remember how you smiled  
To see me write your name upon  
The soft sea-sand . . . *O! what a child!*  
*You think you're writing upon stone!*

I have since written what no tide  
Shall ever wash away, what men  
Unborn shall read o'er ocean wide,  
And find Ianthe's name again."

His best known lines, "carved as it were in ivory or in gems,"

were written on another of these girls-friends who had died suddenly in India :—

“ Ah, what avails the scepted race?  
Ah, what the form divine?  
What every virtue, every grace?  
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes  
May weep, but never see,  
A night of memories and of sighs  
I consecrate to thee.”

At the age of twenty-three (in 1798) Landor published *Gebir*, his first and most important long poem, in which we already find in full measure “Landor’s peculiar qualities,” to use Mr. Colvin’s accurate words, “of haughty splendour and massive concentration.” But it is sad to see how the energy which produced at the centre creations so calm and lofty spent itself wildly at the periphery against the trivial details of daily life. At Llanthony, where he had bought an estate, Landor was engaged in constant law-suits and quarrels with neighbours, tenants, and labourers. He was for ever flaming out into fierce indignation because his fellow-men failed to behave after the ideal fashion of ancient Romans. At last he was provoked to deal physical chastisement to an insolent attorney, following it up, as was his fashion, by a discharge of Latin lampoons. At this point, and having also sunk all his money in the estate, he had to beat a retreat to the Continent. At Como, however, shortly afterwards we find him threatening to thrash a magistrate. At Leghorn he is said to have challenged a secretary of legation for whistling in the street when Mrs. Landor passed, and he wrote a formal complaint to the Foreign Office concerning the character of “the wretches they employed abroad.” He was on terms of chronic misunderstanding with the police. When in 1821, in the maturity of his power, he began to produce the *Imaginary Conversations*, it is amid the same dust and heat. He hears nothing of his manuscript,



concludes, of course, that it is lost or rejected. "This disappointment," he writes, "has brought back my old bilious complaint, together with the sad reflection on that fatality which has followed me through life, of doing everything in vain. I have, however, had the resolution to tear in pieces all my sketches and projects, and to forswear all future undertakings. I try to sleep away my time, and pass two-thirds of the twenty-four hours in bed. I may speak of myself as of a dead man. I will say, then, that these *Conversations* contained as forcible writing as exists on earth."

The contrast between Landor's marriage and his views concerning marriage has often been pointed out. "Death itself," he writes, "to the reflecting mind is less serious than marriage. . . . Death is not even a blow, is not even a pulsation ; it is a pause. But marriage unrolls the awful lot of numberless generations." At the age of thirty-six he saw a young lady at a ball at Bath. "By heavens !" he exclaimed, "that's the nicest girl in the room, and I'll marry her." A few weeks later he did so. She was a commonplace provincial beauty, many years younger than himself, lively in her own way, totally unfitted to be a companion for Landor. On his retreat from Llanthony he stopped at Jersey to join his wife ; here they quarrelled, as often before, and she taunted him with their inequality of age before her sister. The next morning Landor set sail for France, in an oyster boat, alone. But the rupture was not on this occasion final.

Landor was accustomed to relate how Hazlitt in his deep gruff voice had described Wordsworth to him. "Well, sir, did you ever see a horse, sir ? Then, sir, you have seen Wordsworth, sir,—and a very long-faced horse at that, sir !" Landor himself resembled a lion ; few persons who met him in mature or later life fail to speak of his leonine appearance. Thus, Crabbe Robinson, who knew him at Florence in 1830, writes—"He was a man of florid complexion, with large, full eyes ; altogether a 'leonine' man, and with a fierceness of tone well-suited to his name ; his decisions being confident, and on all subjects, whether of taste or life, unqualified, each standing for

itself, not caring whether it was in harmony with what had gone before, or would follow from the same oracular lips." (The same writer records the sentence in which an Italian summed up the feelings of mingled awe and amusement that Landor inspired—"All Englishmen are mad, but this one —!" ) His laughter also is frequently mentioned, "a laughter so pantomimic yet so genial," says Lord Houghton, "rising out of a momentary silence into peals so cumulative and sonorous, that all contradiction and possible affront were merged for ever." Here and all through there was something Olympian in Landor. "His very words are thunder and lightning," said his friend Southey, "such is the power and splendour with which they burst out. But all is perfectly natural ; there is no trick about him."

Notwithstanding all his impetuosity, Landor's "Achillean wrath" represents a part only of the man's nature. A very keen observer, Charles Dickens, has recorded that at the height of his indignation, and when his hands were clenched, there was "a noticeable tendency to relaxation on the part of the thumb." Leigh Hunt, who knew him about 1820, writes—"He is like a stormy mountain pine that should produce lilies. After indulging the partialities of his friendships and enmities, and trampling on kings and ministers, he shall cool himself, like a Spartan worshipping a moonbeam, in the patient meekness of Lady Jane Grey." He was charming towards boys, he loved the ways and the companionship of children ; his affection for animals is described in Boythorn of *Bleak House* (taken from Landor with the genius and much else left out), who would declaim "with unimaginable energy" while his canary was perched on his thumb, Landor's favourite animal being, however, a dog. His tenderness, as it may be called, for flowers has left many traces on his work, especially his poems, and a story told of him by the Italians round Fiesole, where he lived for many years, is at least *ben trovato*. One day, it is said, in a fit of anger, he threw his cook out of the window ; immediately after he was seen at the window beneath which the injured man lay : "Good God ! I forgot the violets." To women he was always

gentle—regarding them, it appears, as a very superior sort of flower—and always attractive. Lady Blessington, a competent authority, thought him the most genuinely polite man in Europe ; “he was chivalry incarnate,” said Miss Kate Field. Mrs. Lynn Lynton describes her first accidental meeting with him when he was over seventy—“a noble-looking old man, badly dressed in shabby snuff-coloured clothes, a dirty old blue necktie, unstarched cotton shirt—with a front more like a night-gown than a shirt—and ‘knubbly’ applepie boots. But underneath the rusty old hat-brim gleamed a pair of quiet and penetrating grey-blue eyes ; the voice was sweet and masterly, the manner that of a man of rare distinction. . . . I was taken by surprise. Here stood in the flesh one of my great spiritual masters, one of my most revered intellectual guides. I remember how the blood came into my face as I dashed up to him with both hands held out, and said ‘Mr. Landor ! oh ! is this Mr. Landor ?’ as if he had been a god suddenly revealed. And I remember the amused smile with which he took both my hands in his and said—‘And who is this little girl, I wonder ?’”

He stood aloof for the most part from his great contemporaries. For Southey he cherished always a devoted and chivalrous affection which led him to over-estimate Southey's position. As a critic Landor belonged to a school that flourished before Sainte-Beuve and Taine had re-created criticism. His is the criticism of words and sentences, like Leigh Hunt's—less sensitive and sympathetic, more pungent and incisive. He had nothing of the deeper insight of Coleridge, De Quincey, or Lamb at their best. For Wordsworth's poetry he had an enthusiastic but very imperfect appreciation, preferring poems like *Laodamia*. At a later period he finds in Wordsworth “a sad deficiency of vital heat.” Scott he called “a great ale-house writer,” but at the latter part of his life fell back on his novels with much enjoyment. He always admired Lamb, and wrote some of his finest elegiac verses on his death. For Coleridge he cared very moderately. Of Keats, on the other hand, he wrote that he “already far surpassed all his contemporaries in this country in the poet's most noble attributes.” Of Byron he spoke contemptuously,



though he could not fail to perceive his poetic energy. Byron belonged to a younger generation, and his turbulent spirit struck across the measured antique decorum within whose boundaries Landor sought to restrain the tumult of the soul. He only saw Byron once. On going into a perfumer's shop to buy a pot of ottar of roses he found Byron buying soap. When, however, Byron died on a mission in the cause of freedom Landor wrote a noble eulogy of him. Shelley lived at Pisa at the same time as Landor; they never met, though each ardently admired the other's poetry, because Landor was held back by the wild rumours that circulated concerning Shelley. Later on he deeply regretted the misunderstanding that had kept them apart, and while assigning to Shelley almost the first place both as a poet and a prose-writer, wrote that "his generosity and charity went far beyond those of any man (I believe) at present in existence." Of Browning he wrote:—

"Since Chaucer was alive and hale,  
No man hath walked along our roads with steps  
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue  
So varied in discourse."

Shortly before Landor's death Swinburne went over to Florence to see him, and the writer whose "ingenious" wit Samuel Parr had once distinguished received the homage of a young poet who belonged to an altogether different world.

Landor continued till near the last to produce work which grew more vivid and brilliant rather than dimmer. "Do you think the grand old Pagan wrote that piece just now?" asks Carlyle of a *Conversation* published when Landor was over eighty. "The sound of it is like the ring of Roman swords on the helmets of barbarians! The unsubduable old Roman!" His life closes with sadness that has in it, as it has been said, a touch of Lear's tragedy. Still as reckless and untamable as ever, the "Olympian schoolboy" had engaged in a violent quarrel at Bath; it was necessary to take legal proceedings against him, and he was compelled to leave England. His wife

and children, to whom he had made over all his property, and whom he had not seen for many years, still lived at Florence; unwisely he was induced to rejoin them. Here, in what had been his old home at Fiesole, his own family not only made life intolerable to him—an easy thing to do perhaps—but refused to make any allowance which would permit him to live by himself. One day he presented himself before Mr. Browning, almost penniless, declaring that nothing would induce him to return. It appears to have been largely owing to Browning's considerate kindness (as during many previous years to Forster's) that the old lion was enabled to spend the last few years of his life in peace. At this time he had become more leonine and majestic than ever—the very type of that “race of splendid and savage old men” announced by Whitman. He still wrote with the old mastery; he still had a dog, Giallo, who shared all his opinions; he taught Latin to a young American friend, Miss Kate Field, who has written of him affectionately. But the end was approaching; his two youngest sons came to him during the last weeks, and he died on the 17th of September 1864 in his ninetieth year. Some years earlier he had said in noble lines that are Greek both in spirit and in form :—

“I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;  
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;  
I warmed both hands before the fire of life;  
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.”

At the outset I coupled Landor's name with Milton's. There is for this classification a reason which lies not merely in the similarity of their temperament and haughty isolation, or in their austere republicanism. In Landor's prose, as in Milton's verse, we see the essentially *romantic* northern genius dominated by a plastic force which we may call *classic*. These two words indicate the two great and opposing tendencies, rarely united, which run through all literature. The classic tendency is towards simplicity and calm, towards clear and definite outline, as of sculpture, and the classic artist has wrought the substance

of his work to the measure of his ideal. The romantic artist, on the other hand, is a painter rather than a sculptor ; he cares more for vivid colour than for definite outline ; he delights in picturesque profusion. The classic artist lives in a temple ; the romantic artist dwells in the forest. Spenser is the most romantic of romantic poets, and the English genius is essentially romantic ; all our poets of the first rank, with the single exception of Wordsworth, are on the romantic side. Wordsworth, whenever he is great as an artist, has the easy self-control, the clear outline and sane simplicity of classic art. He knows that, in the words he has put into the mouth of Protesilaus when he attempts to soothe Laodamia's passion,

“ The gods approve  
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul.”

And Wordsworth as an artist is perhaps the least understood of our great poets. In prose also we are predominantly and characteristically romantic. Even in the period of our classic prose, the period of Dryden and Swift, there is a tendency towards a barren frigidity ; it is too often pseudo-classic, having the same relation to the true classic as those strange and hideous church-*facades* that still linger among us have to a genuine antique temple. After that long and steadying period of retrenchment our characteristic romantic prose burst out with renewed vigour. Landor has all the luxuriant energy of the native character. But perhaps out of the very turbulence of his nature he had learnt to approve

“ The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul.”

It was because in him there was this tumult to subdue—and not that foundation of bovine passivity on which Wordsworth's art rests—that he is not a purely classic artist. Landor's position may best be shown by illustration. This is how Ruskin—unsurpassable in romantic prose—describes the Alps as seen from the plain of Piedmont—“A wilderness of jagged peaks, cast in passionate and fierce profusion along the

circumference of heaven ; precipice behind precipice, and gulf beyond gulf, filled with the flowing of the sunset, and forming mighty channels for the flowings of the clouds, which roll up against them out of the vast Italian plain, forced together by the narrowing crescent, and breaking up at last against the Alpine wall in towers of spectral spray ; or sweeping up its ravines with long moans of complaining thunder." In Landor's pages natural sights and sounds have been subjected to the plastic imagination, and come before us, not as molten lava, but moulded into concrete images, massive or pungent. "When our conversation paused awhile in the stillness of midnight, we heard the distant waves break heavily. Their sound, as you remarked, was such as you could imagine the sound of a giant might be, who, coming back from travel into some smooth and level and still and solitary place, with all his armour and all his spoils about him, casts himself slumberously down to rest." And he describes the internal world in the same fashion :—"There is a gloom in deep love, as in deep water : there is a silence in it which suspends the foot, and the folded arms and the dejected head are the images it reflects. No voice shakes its surface : the muses themselves approach it with a tardy and a timid step, and with a low and tremulous and melancholy song." And again, of a poet for whom he had little love :—"Spenser's is a spacious but somewhat low chamber, heavy with rich tapestry, on which the figures are mostly disproportioned, but some of the faces are lively and beautiful ; the furniture is part creaking and worm-eaten, part fragrant with cedar and sandal-wood and aromatic gums and balsams ; every table and mantelpiece and cabinet is covered with gorgeous vases, and birds, and dragons, and houses in the air." He proceeds always by a series of clear and definite concrete images, vivified by intellect and emotion. Realising that all language is metaphor he is determined that his shall be distinct metaphor, and while he ranges to remote antiquity in search of images he is best pleased when they are simplest and most familiar. At the finest Landor's is not only the most substantial but also the most musical of styles. No one has written prose

so like poetry and yet so unfailingly true to the laws of prose. To realise this we need only turn to the *Conversation* between Leofric and Godiva. Newman's style is among the most musical, but its exquisite melody is thin beside the masculine harmony of this "deep-chested music."

Landor's affinities are indicated by his tastes. Among the ancients his favourite poet was Catullus, in whom the colour and passion that we should term romantic are restrained—and only just restrained—by classic form. Among the moderns, after Shakspeare, he loved above all Milton; among later poets he has spoken perhaps most enthusiastically of Keats, in whom also we find the same harmony of opposing traditions as in Milton. Outside English and ancient literature there was no writer for whom he had so much affection as Boccaccio, and of Boccaccio we may say, in the words of a fine critic, Emile Montégut, as of Landor, "If his form is classic, his matter, his prime substance is romantic, so that at the same moment that he recalls Livy, Sallust, and Cicero, he carries the imagination towards Shakspeare, Spenser and Chaucer." It is necessary to state clearly Landor's position in English prose, because there appears to be some confusion in the matter; and while Mr. Colvin unhesitatingly places Landor on the classic side, Mr. Saintsbury classes him with the writers of romantic prose. But indeed a writer's style is his most deep-rooted and inalienable possession; we cannot too carefully ascertain its form and quality. Landor's organ-voice is determined by the whole structure of the man's tumultuous nature enamoured of calm, the strength and the tenderness of the pine that produced lilies.

Landor is, as M. Sarrazin, one of his best critics, remarks, a great and typical Englishman, the representative of an "aristocratic republic." Emerson, who came to Europe attracted by the desire to see three or four men among whom was Landor, has recorded a similar opinion. "He has a wonderful brain," he writes, after a visit to the villa at Fiesole, "despotic, violent, and inexhaustible, meant for a soldier, by what chance converted to letters, in which there is not a style nor a tint not known to him, yet with an English appetite for



actions and heroes." He showed this appetite when, on Napoleon's invasion of Spain, he went over and with his own energy and money raised a body of men with whom he marched across the country to the seat of war ; and a little later he was only hindered from going to Spain again by the state of his own affairs. Landor is above all an artist and a man of letters, but there is an heroic temper in his work.

He desired to walk "with Epicurus on the right hand and Epictetus on the left." His general philosophical attitude is indicated in the three *Conversations* with which this volume concludes. He belonged to what is called the English school, and attached himself not so much to any later writer as to Bacon, to whom, he somewhere says, Shakspeare and Milton might look up reverently. "I meddle not at present with infinity or eternity," he makes Diogenes say to Plato ; "when I can comprehend them I will talk about them. You metaphysicians kill the flower-bearing and fruit-bearing glebe with delving and turning over and sifting, and never bring any solid and malleable mass from the dark profundity in which you labour. . . . This is philosophy : to make remote things tangible, common things extensively useful ; useful things extensively common, and to leave the least necessary for the last." In religion he insisted chiefly on love to humanity and the widest toleration. In politics he was a republican of the school of Plutarch, with a lively hatred of kings. His republicanism was aristocratic, a government by the fittest, and he never reconciled this with modern democracy, which, he thought, must lead to despotism. He had a strenuous love of freedom ; if it is better to have one master than many, Petrarch says in the *Pentameron*, let a man's self be that one master. The practical political measures which Landor supported were such as those in favour of the removal of Catholic disabilities, of mitigated penal laws, of land legislation for the relief of Ireland, and the Factory Acts. He followed with passionate interest the movement of Italian emancipation.\*

\* It is interesting to note that Landor, with his intense individualism, was in favour of what would be called Socialistic legislation ; and with evident approval he puts the following words in the mouth of William

There are many deductions to be made in the estimate of Landor's life-work. He is a great artist, but within narrow limits ; he can be colossal in a sentence or within a few pages, but beyond these limits he is wanting in architectonic power—the power of duly proportioning a great whole—and sprawls about in as purely romantic fashion as Spenser. He can rarely describe vivacity or progression ; action in his pages always stands still. One must never in reading Landor hasten towards any climax or focus of interest, for none such exists ; the reader must accompany Landor in an open-eyed and leisurely fashion if he is to receive all the enjoyment and exhilaration of this companionship. Landor is not always in touch with his reader ; he can never be described as light reading ; even his humour is generally elephantine ; sometimes he spends too much time on uninteresting or merely scholarly excursions ; sometimes, notwithstanding the series of clear-cut concrete images by which he proceeds, his effort after concentration results in apparent obscurity. But when all deductions are made we must return to Landor again and again—to adopt Emerson's words—"for wisdom, wit, and indignation which are unforgettable."

With his sound fibre and sinewy strength, his massive energy, which bears in its bosom tenderness so exquisite, this "gigantic and Olympian schoolboy" seems to be the younger brother of an elder race, of Chaucer and Rabelais and Bacon ; he has little of the subtle and supple skill that belongs to the children of a more sublimated civilisation, to Heine, or Emerson, or Renan. "I hate both poetry and wine without body. Look at Shakspeare, Bacon, and Milton ; were these your pure imagination men ? The least of them, whichever it was, carried a

Penn :—"Every government should provide for every subject the means of living both honestly and at ease. We should bring out of every man and every creature as much utility as we may : now, much utility will never be produced, unless we render life easy and comfortable. If all men and women would labour six hours in the twenty-four, some mentally, some corporeally, setting apart one day in the seven, all the work would be completed that is requisite for our innocent and rational desires. . . . I tell thee the thing is possible, and is done."

jewel of poetry about him, worth all his tribe that came after. They stood among substantial men, and sang upon recorded actions." Landor, too, stands among substantial men ; he is of the same virile tribe as Burns, and as Browning, and as Whitman. To say great things greatly is an achievement which, like the noblest outcomes of the art-instinct, like a play by Shakspeare, or a Venus by Titian, is on the level of a deed of heroism or devotion. It stirs the pulses of our blood, and lifts the common lives of men into a larger and sweeter air.







## IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.



### MARCELLUS AND HANNIBAL.

[Marcellus, the Commander of the Roman army, lies before Hannibal, mortally wounded.]

*Hannibal.* Could a Numidian horseman ride no faster? Marcellus! oh! Marcellus! He moves not—he is dead. Did he not stir his fingers? Stand wide, soldiers—wide, forty paces—give him air—bring water—halt! Gather those broad leaves, and all the rest, growing under the brushwood—unbrace his armour. Loose the helmet first—his breast rises. I fancied his eyes were fixed on me—they have rolled back again. Who presumed to touch my shoulder? This horse? It was surely the horse of Marcellus! Let no man mount him. Ha! ha! the Romans, too, sink into luxury: here is gold about the charger.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* Execrable thief! The golden chain of our king under a beast's grinders! The vengeance of the gods hath overtaken the impure——

*Hannibal.* We will talk about vengeance when we have entered Rome, and about purity among the priests, if they

will hear us. Sound for the surgeon. That arrow may be extracted from the side, deep as it is.—The conqueror of Syracuse lies before me.—Send a vessel off to Carthage. Say Hannibal is at the gates of Rome.—Marcellus, who stood alone between us, fallen. Brave man! I would rejoice and cannot.—How awfully serene a countenance! Such as we hear are in the islands of the Blessed. And how glorious a form and stature! Such too was theirs! They also once lay thus upon the earth wet with their blood—few other enter there. And what plain armour!

*Gaulish Chieftain.* My party slew him—indeed I think I slew him myself. I claim the chain: it belongs to my king; the glory of Gaul requires it. Never will she endure to see another take it.

*Hannibal.* My friend, the glory of Marcellus did not require him to wear it. When he suspended the arms of your brave king in the temple, he thought such a trinket unworthy of himself and of Jupiter. The shield he battered down, the breast-plate he pierced with his sword—these he showed to the people and to the gods; hardly his wife and little children saw this, ere his horse wore it.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* Hear me, O Hannibal!

*Hannibal.* What! when Marcellus lies before me? when his life may perhaps be recalled? when I may lead him in triumph to Carthage? when Italy, Sicily, Greece, Asia, wait to obey me? Content thee! I will give thee mine own bridle, worth ten such.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* For myself?

*Hannibal.* For thyself.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* And these rubies and emeralds, and that scarlet——

*Hannibal.* Yes, yes.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* O glorious Hannibal! unconquerable

hero! O my happy country! to have such an ally and defender. I swear eternal gratitude—yes, gratitude, love, devotion, beyond eternity.

*Hannibal.* In all treaties we fix the time: I could hardly ask a longer. Go back to thy station.—I would see what the surgeon is about, and hear what he thinks. The life of Marcellus! the triumph of Hannibal! what else has the world in it? Only Rome and Carthage: these follow.

*Marcellus.* I must die then? The gods be praised! The commander of a Roman army is no captive.

*Hannibal (to the Surgeon).* Could not he bear a sea-voyage? Extract the arrow.

*Surgeon.* He expires that moment.

*Marcellus.* It pains me: extract it.

*Hannibal.* Marcellus, I see no expression of pain on your countenance, and never will I consent to hasten the death of an enemy in my power. Since your recovery is hopeless, you say truly you are no captive.

*(To the Surgeon.)* Is there nothing, man, that can assuage the mortal pain? for, suppress the signs of it as he may, he must feel it. Is there nothing to alleviate and allay it?

*Marcellus.* Hannibal, give me thy hand—thou hast found it and brought it me, compassion.

*(To the Surgeon.)* Go, friend; others want thy aid; several fell around me.

*Hannibal.* Recommend to your country, O Marcellus, while time permits it, reconciliation and peace with me, informing the Senate of my superiority in force, and the impossibility of resistance. The tablet is ready: let me take off this ring—try to write, to sign it, at least. Oh, what satisfaction I feel at seeing you able to rest upon the elbow, and even to smile!

*Marcellus.* Within an hour or less, with how severe a brow would Minos say to me, "Marcellus, is this thy writing?"

Rome loses one man : she hath lost many such, and she still hath many left.

*Hannibal.* Afraid as you are of falsehood, say you this ? I confess in shame the ferocity of my countrymen. Unfortunately, too, the nearer posts are occupied by Gauls, infinitely more cruel. The Numidians are so in revenge : the Gauls both in revenge and in sport. My presence is required at a distance, and I apprehend the barbarity of one or other, learning, as they must do, your refusal to execute my wishes for the common good, and feeling that by this refusal you deprive them of their country, after so long an absence.

*Marcellus.* Hannibal, thou art not dying.

*Hannibal.* What then ? What mean you ?

*Marcellus.* That thou mayest, and very justly, have many things yet to apprehend : I can have none. The barbarity of thy soldiers is nothing to me : mine would not dare be cruel. Hannibal is forced to be absent ; and his authority goes away with his horse. On this turf lies defaced the semblance of a general ; but Marcellus is yet the regulator of his army. Dost thou abdicate a power conferred on thee by thy nation ? Or wouldst thou acknowledge it to have become, by thy own sole fault, less plenary than thy adversary's ?

I have spoken too much : let me rest ; this mantle oppresses me.

*Hannibal.* I placed my mantle on your head when the helmet was first removed, and while you were lying in the sun. Let me fold it under, and then replace the ring.

*Marcellus.* Take it, Hannibal. It was given me by a

poor woman who flew to me at Syracuse, and who covered it with her hair, torn off in desperation that she had no other gift to offer. Little thought I that her gift and her words should be mine. How suddenly may the most powerful be in the situation of the most helpless ! Let that ring and the mantle under my head be the exchange of guests at parting. The time may come, Hannibal, when thou (and the gods alone know whether as conqueror or conquered) mayest sit under the roof of my children, and in either case it shall serve thee. In thy adverse fortune, they will remember on whose pillow their father breathed his last ; in thy prosperous (Heaven grant it may shine upon thee in some other country !) it will rejoice thee to protect them. We feel ourselves the most exempt from affliction when we relieve it, although we are then the most conscious that it may befall us.

There is one thing here which is not at the disposal of either.

*Hannibal.* What ?

*Marcellus.* This body.

*Hannibal.* Whither would you be lifted ? Men are ready.

*Marcellus.* I meant not so. My strength is failing. I seem to hear rather what is within than what is without. My sight and my other senses are in confusion. I would have said—This body, when a few bubbles of air shall have left it, is no more worthy of thy notice than of mine ; but thy glory will not let thee refuse it to the piety of my family.

*Hannibal.* You would ask something else. I perceive an inquietude not visible till now.

*Marcellus.* Duty and Death make us think of home sometimes.

*Hannibal.* Thitherward the thoughts of the conqueror and of the conquered fly together.

*Marcellus.* Hast thou any prisoners from my escort?

*Hannibal.* A few dying lie about—and let them lie—they are Tuscans. The remainder I saw at a distance, flying, and but one brave man among them—he appeared a Roman—a youth who turned back, though wounded. They surrounded and dragged him away, spurring his horse with their swords. These Etrurians measure their courage carefully, and tack it well together before they put it on, but throw it off again with lordly ease.

Marcellus, why think about them? or does aught else disquiet your thoughts?

*Marcellus.* I have suppressed it long enough. My son—my beloved son!

*Hannibal.* Where is he? Can it be? Was he with you?

*Marcellus.* He would have shared my fate—and has not. Gods of my country! beneficent throughout life to me, in death surpassingly beneficent: I render you, for the last time, thanks.

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## QUEEN ELIZABETH AND CECIL.

*Elizabeth.* I advise thee again, churlish Cecil, how that our Edmund Spenser, whom thou callest most uncourteously a whining whelp, hath good and solid reason for his complaint. God's blood! shall the lady that tieth my garter and shuffles the smock over my head, or the lord that steadieth my chair's back while I eat, or the other that looketh to my buck-hounds lest they be mangy, be holden



by me in higher esteem and estate than he who hath placed me among the bravest of past times, and will as safely and surely set me down among the loveliest in the future?

*Cecil.* Your Highness must remember he carouseth fully for such deserts: fifty pounds a-year of unclipped moneys, and a butt of canary wine; not to mention three thousand acres in Ireland, worth fairly another fifty and another butt, in seasonable and quiet years.

*Elizabeth.* The moneys are not enough to sustain a pair of grooms and a pair of palfreys; and more wine hath been drunken in my presence at a feast. The moneys are given to such men, that they may not incline nor be obligated to any vile or lowly occupation; and the canary, that they may entertain such promising wits as court their company and converse; and that in such manner there may be alway in our land a succession of these heirs unto fame. He hath written, not indeed with his wonted fancifulness, nor in learned and majestical language, but in homely and rustic wise, some verses which have moved me, and haply the more inasmuch as they demonstrate to me that his genius hath been dampened by his adversities. Read them.

*Cecil.*

“How much is lost when neither heart nor eye  
Rosewinged Desire or fabling Hope deceives;  
When boyhood with quick throb hath ceased to spy  
The dubious apple in the yellow leaves;

“When, rising from the turf where youth reposed,  
We find but deserts in the far-sought shore;  
When the huge book of Faery-land lies closed,  
And those strong brazen clasps will yield no more.”

*Elizabeth.* The said Edmund hath also furnished unto the weaver at Arras, John Blanquieres, on my account, a

description for some of his cunningest wenches to work at, supplied by mine own self, indeed, as far as the subject-matter goes, but set forth by him with figures and fancies, and daintily enough bedecked. I could have wished he had thereunto joined a fair comparison between Dian—no matter—he might perhaps have fared the better for it ; but poets' wits,—God help them !—when did they ever sit close about them? Read the poesy, not over-rich, and concluding very awkwardly and meanly.

*Cecil.*

“ Where forms the lotus, with its level leaves  
And solid blossoms, many floating isles,  
What heavenly radiance swift descending cleaves  
The darksome wave ! Unwonted beauty smiles

“ On its pure bosom, on each bright-eyed flower,  
On every nymph, and twenty sate around.  
Lo ! 'twas Diana—from the sultry hour  
Hither she fled, nor fear'd she sight or sound.

“ Unhappy youth, whom thirst and quiver-reeds  
Drew to these haunts, whom awe forbade to fly !  
Three faithful dogs before him rais'd their heads,  
And watched and wonder'd at that fix'd eye.

“ Forth sprang his favourite—with her arrow-hand  
Too late the goddess hid what hand may hide,  
Of every nymph and every reed complain'd,  
And dashed upon the bank the waters wide.

“ On the prone head and sandal'd feet they flew—  
Lo ! slender hoofs and branching horns appear !  
The last marr'd voice not e'en the favourite knew,  
But bay'd and fasten'd on the upbraiding deer.

“ Far be, chaste goddess, far from me and mine  
The stream that tempts thee in the summer noon !  
Alas, that vengeance dwells with charms divine——”



*Elizabeth.* Pshaw! give me the paper: I forewarned thee how it ended,—pitifully, pitifully.

*Cecil.* I cannot think otherwise than that the undertaker of the aforecited poesy hath chosen your Highness; for I have seen painted—I know not where, but I think no farther off than Putney—the identically same Dian, with full as many nymphs, as he calls them, and more dogs. So small a matter as a page of poesy shall never stir my choler nor twitch my purse-string.

*Elizabeth.* I have read in Plinius and Mela of a runlet near Dodona, which kindled by approximation an unlighted torch, and extinguished a lighted one. Now, Cecil, I desire no such a jetty to be celebrated as the decoration of my court: in simpler words, which your gravity may more easily understand, I would not from the fountain of honour give lustre to the dull and ignorant, deadening and leaving in its tomb the lamp of literature and genius. I ardently wish my reign to be remembered: if my actions were different from what they are, I should as ardently wish it to be forgotten. Those are the worst of suicides, who voluntarily and propensely stab or suffocate their fame, when God hath commanded them to stand on high for an example. We call him parricide who destroys the author of his existence: tell me, what shall we call him who casts forth to the dogs and birds of prey its most faithful propagator and most firm support? Mark me, I do not speak of that existence which the proudest must close in a ditch,—the narrowest, too, of ditches and the soonest filled and fouled, and whereunto a pinch of ratsbane or a poppy-head may bend him; but of that which reposes on our own good deeds, carefully picked up, skilfully put together, and decorously laid out for us by another's kind understanding: I speak of an existence such as no father is author of, or

provides for. The parent gives us few days and sorrowful ; the poet, many and glorious : the one (supposing him discreet and kindly) best reproves our faults ; the other best remunerates our virtues.

A page of poesy is a little matter : be it so ; but of a truth I do tell thee, Cecil, it shall master full many a bold heart that the Spaniard cannot trouble ; it shall win to it full many a proud and flighty one that even chivalry and manly comeliness cannot touch. I may shake titles and dignities by the dozen from my breakfast-board ; but I may not save those upon whose heads I shake them from rottenness and oblivion. This year they and their sovereign dwell together ; next year, they and their beagle. Both have names, but names perishable. The keeper of my privy-seal is an earl : what then ? the keeper of my poultry-yard is a Cæsar. In honest truth, a name given to a man is no better than a skin given to him : what is not natively his own falls off and comes to nothing.

I desire in future to hear no contempt of penmen, unless a depraved use of the pen shall have so cramped them as to incapacitate them for the sword and for the Council Chamber. If Alexander was the Great, what was Aristoteles who made him so, and taught him every art and science he knew, except three,—those of drinking, of blaspheming, and of murdering his bosom friends ? Come along : I will bring thee back again nearer home. Thou mightest toss and tumble in thy bed many nights, and never eke out the substance of a stanza ; but Edmund, if perchance I should call upon him for his counsel, would give me as wholesome and prudent as any of you. We should indemnify such men for the injustice we do unto them in not calling them about us, and for the mortification they must suffer at seeing their inferiors set before them. Edmund is grave and

gentle : he complains of fortune, not of Elizabeth ; of courts, not of Cecil. I am resolved,—so help me, God !—he shall have no further cause for his repining. Go, convey unto him those twelve silver spoons, with the apostles on them, gloriously gilded ; and deliver into his hand these twelve large golden pieces, sufficing for the yearly maintenance of another horse and groom. Beside which, set open before him with due reverence this Bible, wherein he may read the mercies of God toward those who waited in patience for His blessing ; and this pair of crimson silk hose, which thou knowest I have worn only thirteen months, taking heed that the heel-piece be put into good and sufficient restoration, at my sole charges, by the Italian woman nigh the pollard elm at Charing Cross.

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## TIBERIUS AND VIPSANIA.

[“ Vipsania, the daughter of Agrippa, was divorced from Tiberius by Augustus and Livia, in order that he might marry Julia, and hold the empire by inheritance. He retained such an affection for her, and showed it so intensely when he once met her afterward, that every precaution was taken lest they should meet again.”]

*Tiberius.* Vipsania, my Vipsania, whither art thou walking ?

*Vipsania.* Whom do I see ?—my Tiberius ?

*Tiberius.* Ah ! no, no, no ! but thou seest the father of thy little Drusus. Press him to thy heart the more closely for this meeting, and give him——

*Vipsania.* Tiberius ! the altars, the gods, the destinies, are all between us—I will take it from this hand ; thus, thus shall he receive it.

*Tiberius.* Raise up thy face, my beloved ! I must not shed tears. Augustus, Livia, ye shall not extort them from me. Vipsania ! I may kiss thy head—for I have saved it. Thou sayest nothing. I have wronged thee ; ay ?

*Vipsania.* Ambition does not see the earth she treads on ; the rock and the herbage are of one substance to her. Let me excuse you to my heart, O Tiberius. It has many wants ; this is the first and greatest.

*Tiberius.* My ambition, I swear by the immortal gods, places not the bar of severance between us. A stronger hand, the hand that composes Rome and sways the world——

*Vipsania.* Overawed Tiberius. I know it ; Augustus willed and commanded it.

*Tiberius.* And overawed Tiberius ! Power bent, Death terrified, a Nero ! What is our race, that any should look down on us and spurn us ? Augustus, my benefactor, I have wronged thee ! Livia, my mother, this one cruel deed was thine ! To reign, forsooth, is a lovely thing. O womanly appetite ! Who would have been before me, though the palace of Cæsar cracked and split with emperors, while I, sitting in idleness on a cliff of Rhodes, eyed the sun as he swung his golden censer athwart the heavens, or his image as it overstrode the sea ? I have it before me ; and, though it seems falling on me, I can smile on it—just as I did from my little favourite skiff, painted round with the marriage of Thetis, when the sailors drew their long shaggy hair across their eyes, many a stadium away from it, to mitigate its effulgence.

These, too, were happy days : days of happiness like these I could recall and look back upon with unaching brow.

O land of Greece ! Tiberius blesses thee, bidding thee rejoice and flourish.

Why cannot one hour, Vipsania, beauteous and light as we have led, return ?

*Vipsania.* Tiberius ! is it to me that you were speaking ? I would not interrupt you ; but I thought I heard my name as you walked away and looked up toward the East. So silent !

*Tiberius.* Who dared to call thee ? Thou wert mine before the gods—do they deny it ? Was it my fault——

*Vipsania.* Since we are separated, and for ever, O Tiberius, let us think no more on the cause of it. Let neither of us believe that the other was to blame : so shall separation be less painful.

*Tiberius.* O mother ! and did I not tell thee what she was ?—patient in injury, proud in innocence, serene in grief !

*Vipsania.* Did you say that too ? But I think it was so : I had felt little. One vast wave has washed away the impression of smaller from my memory. Could Livia, could your mother, could she who was so kind to me——

*Tiberius.* The wife of Cæsar did it. But hear me now ; hear me : be calm as I am. No weaknesses are such as those of a mother who loves her only son immoderately ; and none are so easily worked upon from without. Who knows what impulses she received ? She is very, very kind : but she regards me only, and that which at her bidding is to encompass and adorn me. All the weak look after Power, protectress of weakness. Thou art a woman, O Vipsania ! is there nothing in thee to excuse my mother ? So good she ever was to me ! so loving.

*Vipsania.* I quite forgive her : be tranquil, O Tiberius !

*Tiberius.* Never can I know peace—never can I pardon—anyone. Threaten me with thy exile, thy separation, thy seclusion ! Remind me that another climate might endanger



thy health!—There death met me and turned me round. Threaten me to take our son from us—our one boy, our helpless little one—him whom we made cry because we kissed him both together! Rememberest thou? Or dost thou not hear? turning thus away from me!

*Vipsania.* I hear; I hear! Oh cease, my sweet Tiberius! Stamp not upon that stone: my heart lies under it.

*Tiberius.* Ay, there again death, and more than death, stood before me. Oh, she maddened me, my mother did, she maddened me—she threw me to where I am at one breath. The gods cannot replace me where I was, nor atone to me, nor console me, nor restore my senses. To whom can I fly; to whom can I open my heart; to whom speak plainly? There was upon the earth a man I could converse with, and fear nothing; there was a woman, too, I could love, and fear nothing. What a soldier, what a Roman, was thy father, O my young bride! How could those who never saw him have discoursed so rightly upon virtue!

*Vipsania.* These words cool my breast like pressing his urn against it. He was brave: shall Tiberius want courage?

*Tiberius.* My enemies scorn me. I am a garland dropped from a triumphal car, and taken up and looked on for the place I occupied; and tossed away and laughed at. Senators! laugh, laugh! Your merits may be yet rewarded—be of good cheer! Counsel me, in your wisdom, what services I can render you, conscript fathers!

*Vipsania.* This seems mockery: Tiberius did not smile so, once.

*Tiberius.* They had not then congratulated me.

*Vipsania.* On what?

*Tiberius.* And it was not because she was beautiful, as

they thought her, and virtuous, as I know she is; but because the flowers on the altar were to be tied together by my heart-string. On this they congratulated me. Their day will come. Their sons and daughters are what I would wish them to be: worthy to succeed them.

*Vipsania.* Where is that quietude, that resignation, that sanctity, that heart of true tenderness?

*Tiberius.* Where is my love?—my love?

*Vipsania.* Cry not thus aloud, Tiberius! there is an echo in the place. Soldiers and slaves may burst in upon us.

*Tiberius.* And see my tears? There is no echo, Vipsania; why alarm and shake me so? We are too high here for the echoes: the city is below us. Methinks it trembles and totters: would it did! from the marble quays of the Tiber to this rock. There is a strange buzz and murmur in my brain; but I should listen so intensely, I should hear the rattle of its roofs, and shout with joy.

*Vipsania.* Calm, O my life! calm this horrible transport.

*Tiberius.* Spake I so loud? Did I indeed then send my voice after a lost sound, to bring it back; and thou fanciedest it an echo? Wilt not thou laugh with me, as thou were wont to do, at such an error? What was I saying to thee, my tender love, when I commanded—I know not whom—to stand back, on pain of death? Why starest thou on me in such agony? Have I hurt thy fingers, child? I loose them; now let me look! Thou turnest thine eyes away from me. Oh! oh! I hear my crime! Immortal gods! I cursed them audibly, and before the sun, my mother!

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## EPICTETUS AND SENECA.

*Seneca.* Epictetus, I desired your master, Epaphroditus, to send you hither, having been much pleased with his report of your conduct, and much surprised at the ingenuity of your writings.

*Epictetus.* Then I am afraid, my friend——

*Seneca.* *My friend!* are these the expressions—Well, let it pass. Philosophers must bear bravely. The people expect it.

*Epictetus.* Are philosophers, then, only philosophers for the people; and, instead of instructing them, must they play tricks before them? Give me rather the gravity of dancing dogs. Their motions are for the rabble; their reverential eyes and pendant paws are under the pressure of awe at a master; but they are dogs, and not below their destinies.

*Seneca.* Epictetus? I will give you three talents to let me take that sentiment for my own.

*Epictetus.* I would give thee twenty, if I had them, to make it thine.

*Seneca.* You mean, by lending to it the graces of my language?

*Epictetus.* I mean, by lending it to thy conduct. And now let me console and comfort thee, under the calamity I brought on thee by calling thee *my friend*. If thou art not my friend, why send for me? Enemy I can have none: being a slave, Fortune has now done with me.

*Seneca.* Continue, then, your former observations. What were you saying?

*Epictetus.* That which thou interruptedst.

*Seneca.* What was it?

*Epictetus.* I should have remarked that, if thou foundest ingenuity in my writings, thou must have discovered in them some deviation from the plain, homely truths of Zeno and Cleanthes.

*Seneca.* We all swerve a little from them.

*Epictetus.* In practice too?

*Seneca.* Yes, even in practice, I am afraid.

*Epictetus.* Often?

*Seneca.* Too often.

*Epictetus.* Strange! I have been attentive, and yet have remarked but one difference among you great personages at Rome.

*Seneca.* What difference fell under your observation?

*Epictetus.* Crates and Zeno and Cleanthes taught us that our desires were to be subdued by philosophy alone. In this city, their acute and inventive scholars take us aside, and show us that there is not only one way, but two.

*Seneca.* Two ways?

*Epictetus.* They whisper in our ear, "These two ways are philosophy and enjoyment: the wiser man will take the readier, or, not finding it, the alternative." Thou reddenest.

*Seneca.* Monstrous degeneracy.

*Epictetus.* What magnificent rings! I did not notice them until thou liftedst up thy hands to heaven, in detestation of such effeminacy and impudence.

*Seneca.* The rings are not amiss; my rank rivets them upon my fingers: I am forced to wear them. Our emperor gave me one, Epaphroditus another, Tigellinus the third. I cannot lay them aside a single day, for fear of offending the gods, and those whom they love the most worthily.

*Epictetus.* Although they make thee stretch out thy fingers, like the arms and legs of one of us slaves upon a cross.

*Seneca.* Oh horrible ! Find some other resemblance.

*Epictetus.* The extremities of a fig-leaf.

*Seneca.* Ignoble !

*Epictetus.* The claws of a toad, trodden on or stoned.

*Seneca.* You have great need, Epictetus, of an instructor in eloquence and rhetoric: you want topics, and tropes, and figures.

*Epictetus.* I have no room for them. They make such a buzz in the house, a man's own wife cannot understand what he says to her.

*Seneca.* Let us reason a little upon style. I would set you right, and remove from before you the prejudices of a somewhat rustic education. We may adorn the simplicity of the wisest.

*Epictetus.* Thou canst not adorn simplicity, What is naked or defective is susceptible of decoration: what is decorated is simplicity no longer. Thou mayest give another thing in exchange for it; but if thou wert master of it, thou wouldst preserve it inviolate. It is no wonder that we mortals, little able as we are to see truth, should be less able to express it.

*Seneca.* You have formed at present no idea of style.

*Epictetus.* I never think about it. First, I consider whether what I am about to say is true; then, whether I can say it with brevity, in such a manner as that others shall see it as clearly as I do in the light of truth; for, if they survey it as an ingenuity, my desire is ungratified, my duty unfulfilled. I go not with those who dance round the image of Truth, less out of honour to her than to display their agility and address.

*Seneca.* We must attract the attention of readers by novelty, and force, and grandeur of expression.

*Epictetus.* We must. Nothing is so grand as truth, nothing so forcible, nothing so novel.

*Seneca.* Sonorous sentences are wanted to awaken the lethargy of indolence.

*Epictetus.* Awaken it to what? Here lies the question; and a weighty one it is. If thou awakenest men where they can see nothing and do no work, it is better to let them rest: but will not they, thinkest thou, look up at a rainbow, unless they are called to it by a clap of thunder?

*Seneca.* Your early youth, Epictetus, has been, I will not say neglected, but cultivated with rude instruments and unskilful hands.

*Epictetus.* I thank God for it. Those rude instruments have left the turf lying yet toward the sun; and those unskilful hands have plucked out the docks.

*Seneca.* We hope and believe that we have attained a vein of eloquence, brighter and more varied than has been hitherto laid open to the world.

*Epictetus.* Than any in the Greek?

*Seneca.* We trust so.

*Epictetus.* Than your Cicero's?

*Seneca.* If the declaration may be made without an offence to modesty. Surely, you cannot estimate or value the eloquence of that noble pleader?

*Epictetus.* Imperfectly, not being born in Italy; and the noble pleader is a much less man with me than the noble philosopher. I regret that, having farms and villas, he would not keep his distance from the pumping up of foul words against thieves, cut-throats, and other rogues; and that he lied, sweated, and thumped his head and thighs, in behalf of those who were no better.

*Seneca.* Senators must have clients, and must protect them.

*Epictetus.* Innocent or guilty ?

*Seneca.* Doubtless.

*Epictetus.* If I regret what is and might not be, I may regret more what both is and must be. However, it is an amiable thing, and no small merit in the wealthy, even to trifle and play at their leisure hours with philosophy. It cannot be expected that such a personage should espouse her, or should recommend her as an inseparable mate to his heir.

*Seneca.* I would.

*Epictetus.* Yes, Seneca, but thou hast no son to make the match for ; and thy recommendation, I suspect, would be given him before he could consummate the marriage. Every man wishes his sons to be philosophers while they are young ; but takes especial care, as they grow older, to teach them its insufficiency and unfitness for their intercourse with mankind. The paternal voice says, “ You must not be particular ; you are about to have a profession to live by ; follow those who have thriven the best in it.” Now, among these, whatever be the profession, canst thou point out to me one single philosopher ?

*Seneca.* Not just now ; nor, upon reflection, do I think it feasible.

*Epictetus.* Thou, indeed, mayest live much to thy ease and satisfaction with philosophy, having (they say) two thousand talents.

*Seneca.* And a trifle to spare—pressed upon me by that godlike youth, my pupil Nero.

*Epictetus.* Seneca ! where God hath placed a mine, he hath placed the materials of an earthquake.

*Seneca.* A true philosopher is beyond the reach of Fortune.

*Epictetus.* The false one thinks himself so. Fortune cares little about philosophers ; but she remembers where she hath set a rich man, and she laughs to see the Destinies at his door.

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## PETER THE GREAT AND ALEXIS.

[In this tremendous satire—founded, like most of the *Conversations* of this class, on the bare historical fact—Landor concentrates his never-failing hatred of kings. We may compare with it *The Empress Catherine and Princess Dashkof.*]

*Peter.* And so, after flying from thy father's house, thou hast returned again from Vienna. After this affront in the face of Europe, thou daarest to appear before me ?

*Alexis.* My emperor and father ! I am brought before your Majesty, not at my own desire.

*Peter.* I believe it well.

*Alexis.* I would not anger you.

*Peter.* What hope hadst thou, rebel, in thy flight to Vienna ?

*Alexis.* The hope of peace and privacy ; the hope of security ; and, above all things, of never more offending you.

*Peter.* That hope thou hast accomplished.

Thou imaginedst, then, that my brother of Austria would maintain thee at his court—speak !

*Alexis.* No, sir ! I imagined that he would have afforded me a place of refuge.

*Peter.* Didst thou, then, take money with thee ?

*Alexis.* A few gold pieces.

*Peter.* How many ?



*Alexis.* About sixty.

*Peter.* He would have given thee promises for half the money; but the double of it does not purchase a house, ignorant wretch!

*Alexis.* I knew as much as that: although my birth did not appear to destine me to purchase a house anywhere; and hitherto your liberality, my father, hath supplied my wants of every kind.

*Peter.* Not of wisdom, not of duty, not of spirit, not of courage, not of ambition. I have educated thee among my guards and horses, among my drums and trumpets, among my flags and masts. When thou wert a child, and couldst hardly walk, I have taken thee into the arsenal, though children should not enter according to regulations: I have there rolled cannon-balls before thee over iron plates; and I have shown thee bright new arms, bayonets and sabres; and I have pricked the back of my hands until the blood came out in many places; and I have made thee lick it; and I have then done the same to thine. Afterward, from thy tenth year, I have mixed gunpowder in thy grog; I have peppered thy peaches; I have poured bilge-water (with a little good wholesome tar in it) upon thy melons; I have brought out girls to mock thee and cocker thee, and talk like mariners, to make thee braver. Nothing would do. Nay, recollect thee! I have myself led thee forth to the window when fellows were hanged and shot; and I have shown thee every day the halves and quarters of bodies; and I have sent an orderly or chamberlain for the heads; and I have pulled the cap up from over the eyes; and I have made thee, in spite of thee, look steadfastly upon them, incorrigible coward!

And now another word with thee about thy scandalous flight from the palace, in time of quiet too! To the point!



did my brother of Austria invite thee? Did he, or did he not?

*Alexis.* May I answer without doing an injury or disservice to his Imperial Majesty?

*Peter.* Thou mayest. What injury canst thou or any one do, by the tongue, to such as he is?

*Alexis.* At the moment, no; he did not. Nor indeed can I assert that he at any time invited me; but he said he pitied me.

*Peter.* About what? hold thy tongue; let that pass. Princes never pity but when they would make traitors: then their hearts grow tenderer than tripe. He pitied thee, kind soul, when he would throw thee at thy father's head; but finding thy father too strong for him, he now commiserates the parent, laments the son's rashness and disobedience, and would not make God angry for the world. At first, however, there must have been some overture on his part; otherwise thou art too shamefaced for intrusion. Come,—thou hast never had wit enough to lie,—tell me the truth, the whole truth.

*Alexis.* He said that, if ever I wanted an asylum, his court was open to me.

*Peter.* Open! so is the tavern; but folks pay for what they get there. Open, truly! and didst thou find it so?

*Alexis.* He received me kindly.

*Peter.* I see he did.

*Alexis.* Derision, O my father! is not the fate I merit.

*Peter.* True, true! it was not intended.

*Alexis.* Kind father! punish me then as you will.

*Peter.* Villain! wouldst thou kiss my hand, too? Art thou ignorant that the Austrian threw thee away from him, with the same indifference as he would the outermost leaf of a sandy sunburnt lettuce?

*Alexis.* Alas ! I am not ignorant of this.

*Peter.* He dismissed thee at my order. If I had demanded from him his daughter, to be the bed-fellow of a Kalmuc, he would have given her, and praised God.

*Alexis.* O father ! is his baseness my crime ?

*Peter.* No ; thine is greater. Thy intention, I know, is to subvert the institutions it has been the labour of my lifetime to establish. Thou hast never rejoiced at my victories.

*Alexis.* I have rejoiced at your happiness and your safety.

*Peter.* Liar ! coward ! traitor ! when the Polanders and Swedes fell before me, didst thou from thy soul congratulate me ? Didst thou get drunk at home or abroad, or praise the Lord of Hosts and Saint Nicholas ? Wert thou not silent and civil and low-spirited ?

*Alexis.* I lamented the irretrievable loss of human life ; I lamented that the bravest and noblest were swept away the first ; that the gentlest and most domestic were the earliest mourners ; that frugality was supplanted by intemperance ; that order was succeeded by confusion ; and that your Majesty was destroying the glorious plans you alone were capable of devising.

*Peter.* I destroy them ! how ? Of what plans art thou speaking ?

*Alexis.* Of civilising the Muscovites. The Polanders in part were civilised : the Swedes, more than any other nation on the Continent ; and so excellently versed were they in military science, and so courageous, that every man you killed cost you seven or eight.

*Peter.* Thou liest ; nor six. And civilised, forsooth ? Why, the robes of the metropolitan, him at Upsal, are not worth three ducats, between Jew and Livornese. I have

no notion that Poland and Sweden shall be the only countries that produce great princes. What right have they to such as Gustavus and Sobieski? Europe ought to look to this before discontents become general, and the people do to us what we have the privilege of doing to the people. I am wasting my words: there is no arguing with positive fools like thee. So thou wouldst have desired me to let the Polanders and Swedes lie still and quiet! Two such powerful nations!

*Alexis.* For that reason and others I would have gladly seen them rest, until our own people had increased in numbers and prosperity.

*Peter.* And thus thou disputest my right, before my face, to the exercise of the supreme power.

*Alexis.* Sir! God forbid!

*Peter.* God forbid, indeed! What care such villains as thou art what God forbids! He forbids the son to be disobedient to the father; he forbids—he forbids—twenty things. I do not wish, and will not have, a successor who dreams of dead people.

*Alexis.* My father! I have dreamed of none such.

*Peter.* Thou hast, and hast talked about them—Scythians, I think, they call 'em. Now, who told thee, Mr. Professor, that the Scythians were a happier people than we are; that they were inoffensive; that they were free; that they wandered with their carts from pasture to pasture, from river to river: that they traded with good faith; that they fought with good courage; that they injured none, invaded none, and feared none? At this rate I have effected nothing. The great founder of Rome, I heard in Holland, slew his brother for despising the weakness of his walls; and shall the founder of this better place spare a degenerate son, who prefers a vagabond

life to a civilised one, a cart to a city, a Scythian to a Muscovite? Have I not shaved my people, and breeched them? Have I not formed them into regular armies, with bands of music and haversacks? Are bows better than cannon? shepherds than dragoons, mare's milk than brandy, raw steaks than broiled? Thine are tenets that strike at the root of politeness and sound government. Every prince in Europe is interested in rooting them out by fire and sword. There is no other way with false doctrines: breath against breath does little.

*Alexis.* Sire, I never have attempted to disseminate my opinions.

*Peter.* How couldst thou? the seed would fall only on granite. Those, however, who caught it brought it to me.

*Alexis.* Never have I undervalued civilisation: on the contrary, I regretted whatever impeded it. In my opinion, the evils that have been attributed to it sprang from its imperfections and voids; and no nation has yet acquired it more than very scantily.

*Peter.* How so? give me thy reasons—thy fancies rather; for reason thou hast none.

*Alexis.* When I find the first of men, in rank and genius, hating one another, and becoming slanderers and liars in order to lower and vilify an opponent; when I hear the God of mercy invoked to massacres, and thanked for furthering what he reprobates and condemns—I look back in vain on any barbarous people for worse barbarism. I have expressed my admiration of our forefathers, who, not being Christians, were yet more virtuous than those who are; more temperate, more just, more sincere, more chaste, more peaceable.

*Peter.* Malignant atheist!

*Alexis.* Indeed, my father, were I malignant I must be an atheist; for malignity is contrary to the command, and inconsistent with the belief, of God.

*Peter.* Am I Czar of Muscovy, and hear discourses on reason and religion? from my own son too! No, by the Holy Trinity! thou art no son of mine. If thou touchest my knee again, I crack thy knuckles with this tobacco-stopper: I wish it were a sledge-hammer for thy sake. Off, sycophant! Off, run-away slave!

*Alexis.* Father! father! my heart is broken! If I have offended, forgive me!

*Peter.* The State requires thy signal punishment.

*Alexis.* If the State requires it, be it so; but let my father's anger cease!

*Peter.* The world shall judge between us. I will brand thee with infamy.

*Alexis.* Until now, O father! I never had a proper sense of glory. Hear me, O Czar! let not a thing so vile as I am stand between you and the world! Let none accuse you!

*Peter.* Accuse me, rebel! Accuse me, traitor!

*Alexis.* Let none speak ill of you, O my father! The public voice shakes the palace; the public voice penetrates the grave; it precedes the chariot of Almighty God, and is heard at the judgment-seat.

*Peter.* Let it go to the devil! I will have none of it here in Petersburg. Our Church says nothing about it; our laws forbid it. As for thee, unnatural brute, I have no more to do with thee neither!

Ho there! chancellor! What! come at last! Wert napping, or counting thy ducats?

*Chancellor.* Your Majesty's will and pleasure!

*Peter.* Is the Senate assembled in that room?

*Chancellor.* Every member, sire.

*Peter.* Conduct this youth with thee, and let them judge him : thou understandest me.

*Chancellor.* Your Majesty's commands are the breath of our nostrils.

*Peter.* If these rascals are amiss, I will try my new cargo of Livonian hemp upon 'em.

*Chancellor (returning).* Sire ! sire !

*Peter.* Speak, fellow ! Surely they have not condemned him to death, without giving themselves time to read the accusation, that thou comest back so quickly.

*Chancellor.* No, sire ! Nor has either been done.

*Peter.* Then thy head quits thy shoulders.

*Chancellor.* O sire !

*Peter.* Curse thy silly sires ! what art thou about ?

*Chancellor.* Alas ! he fell.

*Peter.* Tie him up to thy chair, then. Cowardly beast ! what made him fall ?

*Chancellor.* The hand of Death ; the name of father.

*Peter.* Thou puzzlest me ; prythee speak plainlier.

*Chancellor.* We told him that his crime was proven and manifest ; that his life was forfeited.

*Peter.* So far, well enough.

*Chancellor.* He smiled.

*Peter.* He did ! did he ? Impudence shall do him little good. Who could have expected it from that smock-face ! Go on—what then ?

*Chancellor.* He said calmly, but not without sighing twice or thrice, "Lead me to the scaffold : I am weary of life ; nobody loves me." I condoled with him, and wept upon his hand, holding the paper against my bosom. He took the corner of it between his fingers, and said, "Read me this paper ; read my death-warrant. Your silence and



tears have signified it ; yet the law has its forms. Do not keep me in suspense. My father says, too truly, I am not courageous ; but the death that leads me to my God shall never terrify me."

*Peter.* I have seen these white-livered knaves die resolutely ; I have seen them quietly fierce like white ferrets, with their watery eyes and tiny teeth. You read it ?

*Chancellor.* In part, sire ! When he heard your Majesty's name accusing him of treason and attempts at rebellion and parricide, he fell speechless. We raised him up : he was motionless ; he was dead !

*Peter.* Inconsiderate and barbarous varlet as thou art, dost thou recite this ill accident to a father ! and to one who has not dined ! Bring me a glass of brandy.

*Chancellor.* And it please your Majesty, might I call a  
—a—

*Peter.* Away and bring it : scamper ! All equally and alike shall obey and serve me.

Hark ye ! bring the bottle with it : I must cool myself—and—hark ye ! a rasher of bacon on thy life ! and some pickled sturgeon, and some krout and caviar, and good strong cheese.

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## LOUIS XIV. AND FATHER LA CHAISE.

*Louis.* Father, there is one thing which I never have confessed ; sometimes considering it almost as a light matter, and sometimes seeing it in its true colours. In my wars against the Dutch I committed an action——

*La Chaise.* Sire, the ears of the Lord are always open to those who confess their sins to their confessor. Cruelties



and many other bad deeds are perpetrated in war, at which we should shudder in our houses at Paris.

*Louis.* The people who were then in their houses did shudder, poor devils! It was ludicrous to see how such clumsy figures skipped, when the bombs fell among their villages, in which the lower part of the habitations was under water; and children looked from the upper windows, between the legs of calves and lambs, and of the old household dog, struggling to free himself, as less ignorant of his danger. Loud shrieks were sometimes heard, when the artillery and other implements of war were silent; for fevers raged within their insulated walls, and wives execrated their husbands, with whom they had lived in concord and tenderness many years, when the father enforced the necessity of throwing their dead infant into the lake below. Our young soldiers on such occasions exercised their dexterity, and took their choice; for the whole family was assembled at the casement, and prayers were read over the defunct, accompanied with some firm and with some faltering responses.

By these terrible examples God punished their heresy.

*La Chaise.* The Lord of Hosts is merciful: he protected your Majesty in the midst of these horrors.

*Louis.* He sustained my strength, kept up my spirits, and afforded me every day some fresh amusement, in the country of this rebellious and blasphemous people, who regularly, a quarter before twelve o'clock, knowing that mass was then performed among us, sang their psalms.

*La Chaise.* I cannot blame a certain degree of severity on such occasions: on much slighter, we read in the Old Testament, nations were smitten with the edge of the sword.

*Louis.* I have wanted to find that place, but my

Testament was not an old one : it was printed at the Louvre in my own time. As for the edge of the sword, it was not always convenient to use that : they are stout fellows ; but our numbers enabled us to starve them out, and we had more engineers and better. Beside which, I took peculiar vengeance on some of the principal families, and on some among the most learned of their professors ; for if any had a dissolute son, who, as dissolute sons usually are, was the darling of the house, I bribed him, made him drunk, and converted him. This occasionally broke the father's heart—God's punishment of stubbornness !

*La Chaise.* Without the especial grace of the Holy Spirit, such conversions are transitory. It is requisite to secure the soul while we have it, by the exertion of a little loving-kindness. I would deliver the poor stray creatures up to their Maker straightway, lest he should call me to account for their backsliding. Heresy is a leprosy, which the whiter it is the worse it is. Those who appear the most innocent and godly, are the very men who do the most mischief and hold the fewest observances. They hardly treat God Almighty like a gentleman, grudge him a clean napkin at his own table, and spend less upon him than upon a Christmas dinner.

*Louis.* O Father La Chaise ! you have searched my heart ; you have brought to light my hidden offences. Nothing is concealed from your penetration. I come forth like a criminal in his chains.

*La Chaise.* Confess, sire, confess ! I will pour the oil into your wounded spirit, taking due care that the vengeance of Heaven be satisfied by your atonement.

*Louis.* Intelligence was brought to me that the cook of the English general had prepared a superb dinner, in consequence of what that insolent and vainglorious people are in

the habit of calling a success. "We shall soon see," exclaimed I, "who is successful: God protects France." The whole army shouted, and, I verily believe, at that moment would have conquered the world. I deferred it: my designs lie in my own breast. Father, I never heard such a shout in my life: it reminded me of Cherubim and Seraphim and Archangels. The infantry cried with joy; the horses capered and neighed and ventriloquised right and left, from an excess of animation. Leopard-skins, bear-skins, Genoa velvet, Mechlin ruffles, Brussels cravats, feathers and fringes and golden bands, up in the air at once; pawings and snortings, threats and adjurations, beginnings and ends of songs. I was Henry and Cæsar, Alexander and David, Charlemagne and Agamemnon: I had only to give the word; they would swim across the Channel, and bring the tyrant of proud Albion back in chains. All my prudence was requisite to repress their ardour.

A letter had been intercepted by my scouts, addressed by the wife of the English general to her husband. She was at Gorcum: she informed him that she would send him a glorious *mince-pie*, for his dinner the following day, in celebration of his victory. "Devil incarnate!" said I, on reading the despatch, "I will disappoint thy malice." I was so enraged that I went within a mile or two of cannon-shot; and I should have gone within half-a-mile, if my dignity had permitted me, or if my resentment had lasted. I liberated the messenger, detaining as hostage his son who accompanied him, and promising that, if the *mince-pie* was secured, I would make him a chevalier on the spot. Providence favoured our arms; but unfortunately there were among my staff-officers some who had fought under Turenne, and who, I suspect, retained the infection of

heresy. They presented the *mince-pie* to me on their knees, and I ate. It was Friday. I did not remember the day when I began to eat ; but the sharpness of the weather, the odour of the pie, and something of vengeance springing up again at the sight of it, made me continue after I had recollected ; and, to my greater condemnation, I had inquired that very morning of what materials it was composed. God set his face against me, and hid from me the light of his countenance. I lost victory after victory, nobody knows how ; for my generals were better than the enemy's, my soldiers more numerous, more brave, more disciplined. And, extraordinary and awful ! even those who swore to conquer or die, ran back again like whelps just gelt, crying, "It is the first duty of a soldier to see his king in safety." I never heard so many fine sentiments or fewer songs. My stomach was out of order by the visitation of the Lord. I took the sacrament on the Sunday.

*La Chaise.* The sacrament on a Friday's *gras* ! I should have recommended first a *de profundis*, a *miserere*, and an *eructavit cor meum*, and lastly a little oil of ricina which, administered by the holy and taken by the faithful, is almost as efficacious in its way as that of Rheims. Penance is to be done : your Majesty must fast ; your Majesty must wear sackcloth next your skin, and carry ashes upon your head before the people.

*Louis.* Father, I cannot consent to this humiliation : the people must fear me. What are you doing with those scissors and that pill ? I am sound ; give it Villeroy or Richelieu.

*La Chaise.* Sire, no impiety, no levity, I pray. In this pill, as your Majesty calls it, are some flakes of ashes from the incense, which seldom is pure gum ; break it between

your fingers, and scatter it upon your peruke. Well done ! Now take this.

*Louis.* Faith ! I have no sore on groin or limb. A black plaster ! what is that for ?

*La Chaise.* This is sackcloth. It is the sack in which Madame de Maintenon put her knitting, until the pins frayed it.

*Louis.* I should have believed that sackcloth means——

*La Chaise.* No interpretations of Scripture, I charge you from authority, sire. Put it on your back or bosom.

*Louis.* God forgive me, sinner ! It has dropped down into my pantaloons : will that do ?

*La Chaise.* Did it, in descending, touch your back, belly, ribs, breast, or shoulder, or any parts that needs mortification, and can be mortified without scandal ?

*Louis.* I placed it between my frills.

*La Chaise.* In such manner as to touch the skin sensibly ?

*Louis.* It tickled me, by stirring a hair or two.

*La Chaise.* Be comforted, then ; for people have been tickled to death.

*Louis.* But, Father, you remit the standing in presence of the people ?

*La Chaise.* Indeed I do not. Stand at the window, son of St. Louis.

*Louis.* And perform the same ceremonies ? no, upon my conscience ! My almoner——

*La Chaise.* They are performed.

*Louis.* But the people will never know what is on my head or in my pantaloons.

*La Chaise.* Penance is performed so far : to-morrow is Friday ; one more rigid must be enforced. Six dishes alone shall come upon the table ; and, although fasting does not



extend to wines or *liqueurs*, I order that three kinds only of wine be presented, and three of *liqueur*.

*Louis*. In the six dishes is soup included?

*La Chaise*. Soup is not served in a dish; but I forbid more than three kinds of soup.

*Louis*. Oysters of Cancale?

*La Chaise*. Those come in barrels; take care they be not dished. Your Majesty must either eat them raw from the barrel, or dressed in scallop, or both; but beware, I say again, of dishing this article, as your soul shall answer for it at the last day. There are those who would prohibit them wholly. I have experienced—I mean in others—strange uncouth effects therefrom, which, unless they shadow forth something mystical, it were better not to provoke.

*Louis*. Pray, Father, why is that frightful day which you mentioned just now, and which I think I have heard mentioned on other occasions, called the last; when the last in this life is over before it comes, and when the first in the next is not begun?

*La Chaise*. It is called the last day by the Church, because after that day the Church can do nothing for the sinner. Her saints, martyrs, and confessors can plead at the bar for him the whole of that day until sunset, some say until after *angelus*; then the books are closed, the candles put out, the doors shut, and the key turned. The flames of purgatory then sink into the floor, and would not wither a cistus-leaf full-blown and shed; there is nothing left but heaven and hell, songs and lamentations.

*Louis*. Permit me to ask another question of no less importance, and connected with my penance. The Bishop of Aix in Provence has sent me thirty fine quails.

*La Chaise*. There are naturalists who assert that quails have fallen from heaven like manna. Externally they bear

the appearance of birds, and I have eaten them in that persuasion. If, however, any one from grave authority is convinced of the contrary, or propends to believe so, and eats thereof, the fault is venial. I conferred with Tamburini on this momentous point. He distinguishes between quails taken in the field, or in the air as they descend, and tame quails bred within coops and enclosures, which are begotten in the ordinary way of generation, and of which the substance in that case must be different. I cannot believe that the Bishop of Aix would be the conservator of creatures so given to fighting and wantonness; but rather opine that his quails alighted somewhere in his diocese, and perhaps as a mark of divine favour to so worthy a member of the Church. It is safer to eat them after twelve o'clock at night; but, where there is purity and humility of spirit, I see not that they are greatly to be dreaded.

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The fiction of the quails will appear extravagant to those only who are in ignorance that such opinions have prevailed among casuists. The Carthusians, to whom animal food is forbidden, whereby they mean solely the flesh of quadrupeds and of birds, may nevertheless eat the otter and the gull; it may be eaten by Catholics even in Lent. From this permission in regard to the *gull*, do we derive the English verb and noun?

We often lay most stress on our slightest faults, and have more apprehension from things unessential than from things essential. When Lord Tylney was on his death-bed, and had not been shaved for two days, he burst suddenly into tears, and cried to his valet, "Are not you ashamed to abandon me? would you let me go this figure into the presence of my Maker?"

He was shaved, and (I hope) presented.

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## HENRY VIII. AND ANNE BOLEYN.

[The King comes disguised to his wife, who has just been condemned to death. Landon's treatment of Anne is very characteristic.]

*Henry.* Dost thou know me, Nanny, in this yeoman's dress? 'S blood! does it require so long and vacant a stare to recollect a husband after a week or two? No tragedy-tricks with me! a scream, a sob, or thy kerchief a trifle the wetter, were enough. Why, verily the little fool faints in earnest. These whey faces, like their kinsfolk the ghosts, give us no warning. Hast had water enough upon thee? Take that, then: art thyself again?

*Anne.* Father of mercies! do I meet again my husband, as was my last prayer on earth? Do I behold my beloved lord—in peace—and pardoned, my partner in eternal bliss? it was his voice. I cannot see him: why cannot I? Oh why do these pangs interrupt the transports of the blessed?

*Henry.* Thou openest thy arms: faith! I came for that. Nanny, thou art a sweet slut. Thou groanest, wench: art in labour? Faith! among the mistakes of the night, I am ready to think almost that thou hast been drinking, and that I have not.

*Anne.* God preserve your Highness: grant me your forgiveness for one slight offence. My eyes were heavy; I fell asleep while I was reading. I did not know of your presence at first; and, when I did, I could not speak. I strove for utterance: I wanted no respect for my liege and husband.

*Henry.* My pretty warm nestling, thou wilt then lie! Thou wert reading, and aloud too, with thy saintly cup of water by thee, and—what! thou art still girlishly fond of those dried cherries!

*Anne.* I had no other fruit to offer your Highness the first time I saw you, and you were then pleased to invent for me some reason why they should be acceptable. I did not dry these : may I present them, such as they are ? We shall have fresh next month.

*Henry.* Thou art always driving away from the discourse. One moment it suits thee to know me, another not.

*Anne.* Remember, it is hardly three months since I miscarried. I am weak, and liable to swoons.

*Henry.* Thou hast, however, thy bridal cheeks, with lustre upon them when there is none elsewhere, and obstinate lips resisting all impression ; but, now thou talkest about miscarrying, who is the father of that boy ?

*Anne.* Yours and mine—He who hath taken him to his own home, before (like me) he could struggle or cry for it.

*Henry.* Pagan, or worse, to talk so ! He did not come into the world alive : there was no baptism.

*Anne.* I thought only of our loss : my senses are confounded. I did not give him my milk, and yet I loved him tenderly ; for I often fancied, had he lived, how contented and joyful he would have made you and England.

*Henry.* No subterfuges and escapes. I warrant, thou canst not say whether at my entrance thou wert waking or wandering.

*Anne.* Faintness and drowsiness came upon me suddenly.

*Henry.* Well, since thou really and truly sleepedst, what didst dream of ?

*Anne.* I begin to doubt whether I did indeed sleep.

*Henry.* Ha ! false one—never two sentences of truth together ! But come, what didst think about, asleep or awake !

*Anne.* I thought that God had pardoned me my offences, and had received me unto him.

*Henry.* And nothing more ?

*Anne.* That my prayers had been heard and my wishes were accomplishing : the angels alone can enjoy more beatitude than this.

*Henry.* Vexatious little devil ! She says nothing now about me, merely from perverseness. Hast thou never thought about me, nor about thy falsehood and adultery ?

*Anne.* If I had committed any kind of falsehood, in regard to you or not, I should never have rested until I had thrown myself at your feet and obtained your pardon ; but, if ever I had been guilty of that other crime, I know not whether I should have dared to implore it, even of God's mercy.

*Henry.* Thou hast heretofore cast some soft glances upon Smeaton ; hast thou not ?

*Anne.* He taught me to play on the virginals, as you know, when I was little, and thereby to please your Highness.

*Henry.* And Brereton and Norris—what have they taught thee ?

*Anne.* They are your servants, and trusty ones.

*Henry.* Has not Weston told thee plainly that he loved thee ?

*Anne.* Yes ; and——

*Henry.* What didst thou ?

*Anne.* I defied him.

*Henry.* Is that all ?

*Anne.* I could have done no more if he had told me that he hated me. Then, indeed, I should have incurred more justly the reproaches of your Highness : I should have smiled.

*Henry.* We have proofs abundant : the fellows shall one and all confront thee. Aye, clap thy hands and kiss thy sleeve, harlot !

*Anne.* Oh that so great a favour is vouchsafed me ! My honour is secure ; my husband will be happy again ; he will see my innocence.

*Henry.* Give me now an account of the moneys thou hast received from me within these nine months. I want them not back : they are letters of gold in record of thy guilt. Thou hast had no fewer than fifteen thousand pounds in that period, without even thy asking ; what hast done with 'it, wanton ?

*Anne.* I have regularly placed it out to interest.

*Henry.* Where ? I demand of thee.

*Anne.* Among the needy and ailing. My Lord Archbishop has the account of it, sealed by him weekly. I also had a copy myself ; those who took away my papers may easily find it ; for there are few others, and they lie open.

*Henry.* Think on my munificence to thee ; recollect who made thee. Dost sigh for what thou hast lost ?

*Anne.* I do, indeed.

*Henry.* I never thought thee ambitious ; but thy vices creep out one by one.

*Anne.* I do not regret that I have been a queen and am no longer one ; nor that my innocence is called in question by those who never knew me ; but I lament that the good people who loved me so cordially, hate and curse me ; that those who pointed me out to their daughters for imitation check them when they speak about me ; and that he whom next to God I have served with most devotion is my accuser.

*Henry.* Wast thou conning over something in that

dingy book for thy defence? Come, tell me, what wast thou reading?

*Anne.* This ancient chronicle. I was looking for some one in my own condition, and must have missed the page. Surely in so many hundred years there shall have been other young maidens, first too happy for exaltation, and after too exalted for happiness—not, perchance, doomed to die upon a scaffold, by those they ever honoured and served faithfully; that, indeed, I did not look for nor think of; but my heart was bounding for any one I could love and pity. She would be unto me as a sister dead and gone; but hearing me, seeing me, consoling me, and being consoled. O my husband! it is so heavenly a thing——

*Henry.* To whine and whimper, no doubt, is vastly heavenly.

*Anne.* I said not so; but those, if there be any such, who never weep, have nothing in them of heavenly or of earthly. The plants, the trees, the very rocks and unsunned clouds, show us at least the semblances of weeping; and there is not an aspect of the globe we live on, nor of the waters and skies around it, without a reference and a similitude to our joys or sorrows.

*Henry.* I do not remember that notion anywhere. Take care no enemy rake out of it something of materialism. Guard well thy empty hot brain; it may hatch more evil. As for those odd words, I myself would fain see no great harm in them, knowing that grief and frenzy strike out many things which would else lie still, and neither spirt nor sparkle. I also know that thou hast never read any thing but Bible and history—the two worst books in the world for young people, and the most certain to lead astray both prince and subject. For which reason I have interdicted and entirely put down the one, and will (by the



blessing of the Virgin and of holy Paul) commit the other to a rigid censor. If it behooves us kings to enact what our people shall eat and drink—of which the most unruly and rebellious spirit can entertain no doubt—greatly more doth it behoove us to examine what they read and think. The body is moved according to the mind and will; we must take care that the movement be a right one, on pain of God's anger in this life and the next.

*Anne.* O my dear husband! it must be a naughty thing, indeed, that makes him angry beyond remission. Did you ever try how pleasant it is to forgive any one? There is nothing else wherein we can resemble God perfectly and easily.

*Henry.* Resemble God perfectly and easily! Do vile creatures talk thus of the Creator?

*Anne.* No, Henry, when his creatures talk thus of him, they are no longer vile creatures! When they know that he is good, they love him; and, when they love him, they are good themselves. O Henry! my husband and King! the judgments of our Heavenly Father are righteous; on this, surely, we must think alike.

*Henry.* And what, then? Speak out; again I command thee, speak plainly! thy tongue was not so torpid but this moment. Art ready? Must I wait?

*Anne.* If any doubt remains upon your royal mind of your equity in this business: should it haply seem possible to you that passion or prejudice, in yourself or another, may have warped so strong an understanding—do but supplicate the Almighty to strengthen and enlighten it, and he will hear you.

*Henry.* What! thou wouldst fain change thy quarters, ay?

*Anne.* My spirit is detached and ready, and I shall



change them shortly, whatever your Highness may determine.

*Henry.* Yet thou appearest hale and resolute, and (they tell me) smirkest and smilest to everybody.

*Anne.* The withered leaf catches the sun sometimes, little as it can profit by it ; and I have heard stories of the breeze in other climates that sets in when daylight is about to close, and how constant it is, and how refreshing. My heart, indeed, is now sustained strangely ; it became the more sensibly so from that time forward, when power and grandeur and all things terrestrial were sunk from sight. Every act of kindness in those about me gives me satisfaction and pleasure, such as I did not feel formerly. I was worse before God chastened me ; yet I was never an ingrate. What pains have I taken to find out the village-girls who placed their posies in my chamber ere I arose in the morning ! How gladly would I have recompensed the forester who lit up a brake on my birthnight, which else had warmed him half the winter ! But these are times past : I was not Queen of England.

*Henry.* Nor adulterous, nor heretical.

*Anne.* God be praised !

*Henry.* Learned saint ! thou knowest nothing of the lighter, but perhaps canst inform me about the graver, of them.

*Anne.* Which may it be, my liege ?

*Henry.* Which may it be ? Pestilence ! I marvel that the walls of this tower do not crack around thee at such impiety.

*Anne.* I would be instructed by the wisest of theologians : such is your Highness.

*Henry.* Are the sins of the body, foul as they are, comparable to those of the soul ?

*Anne.* When they are united, they must be worse.

*Henry.* Go on, go on: thou pushest thy own breast against the sword. God hath deprived thee of thy reason for thy punishment. I must hear more: proceed, I charge thee.

*Anne.* An aptitude to believe one thing rather than another, from ignorance or weakness, or from the more persuasive manner of the teacher, or from his purity of life, or from the strong impression of a particular text at a particular time, and various things beside, may influence and decide our opinion; and the hand of the Almighty, let us hope, will fall gently on human fallibility.

*Henry.* Opinion in matters of faith! rare wisdom! rare religion! Troth, Anne! thou hast well sobered me. I came rather warmly and lovingly; but these light ringlets, by the holy rood, shall not shade this shoulder much longer. Nay, do not start; I tap it for the last time, my sweetest. If the Church permitted it, thou shouldst set forth on thy long journey with the eucharist between thy teeth, however loath.

*Anne.* Love your Elizabeth, my honoured lord, and God bless you! She will soon forget to call me. Do not chide her: think how young she is.

Could I, could I kiss her, but once again! it would comfort my heart,—or break it.

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## JOSEPH SCALIGER AND MONTAIGNE.

*Montaigne.* What could have brought you, M. de l'Escale, to visit the old man of the mountain, other than a good heart? Oh how delighted and charmed I am to hear

you speak such excellent Gascon. You rise early, I see : you must have risen with the sun, to be here at this hour ; it is a stout half-hour's walk from the brook. I have capital white wine, and the best cheese in Auvergne. You saw the goats and the two cows before the castle.

Pierre, thou hast done well : set it upon the table, and tell Master Matthew to split a couple of chickens and broil them, and to pepper but one. Do you like pepper, M. de l'Escale ?

*Scaliger.* Not much.

*Montaigne.* Hold hard ! let the pepper alone : I hate it. Tell him to broil plenty of ham ; only two slices at a time, upon his salvation.

*Scaliger.* This, I perceive, is the antechamber to your library : here are your every-day books.

*Montaigne.* Faith ! I have no other. These are plenty, methinks ; is not that your opinion ?

*Scaliger.* You have great resources within yourself, and therefore can do with fewer.

*Montaigne.* Why, how many now do you think here may be ?

*Scaliger.* I did not believe at first that there could be above fourscore.

*Montaigne.* Well ! are fourscore few ?—are we talking of peas and beans.

*Scaliger.* I and my father (put together) have written well-nigh as many.

*Montaigne.* Ah ! to write them is quite another thing : but one reads books without a spur, or even a pat from our Lady Vanity. How do you like my wine ?—it comes from the little knoll yonder : you cannot see the vines, those chestnut-trees are between.

*Scaliger.* The wine is excellent ; light, odoriferous, with a smartness like a sharp child's prattle.

*Montaigne.* It never goes to the head, nor pulls the nerves, which many do as if they were guitar-strings. I drink a couple of bottles a-day, winter and summer, and never am the worse for it. You gentlemen of the Agennois have better in your province, and indeed the very best under the sun. I do not wonder that the Parliament of Bordeaux should be jealous of their privileges, and call it Bordeaux. Now, if you prefer your own country wine, only say it : I have several bottles in my cellar, with corks as long as rapiers, and as polished. I do not know, M. de l'Escale, whether you are particular in these matters : not quite, I should imagine, so great a judge in them as in others ?

*Scaliger.* I know three things—wine, poetry, and the world.

*Montaigne.* You know one too many, then. I hardly know whether I know anything about poetry ; for I like Clem Marot better than Ronsard. Ronsard is so plaguily stiff and stately, where there is no occasion for it ; I verily do think the man must have slept with his wife in a cuirass.

*Scaliger.* It pleases me greatly that you like Marot. His version of the *Psalms* is lately set to music, and added to the *New Testament*, of Geneva.

*Montaigne.* It is putting a slice of honeycomb into a barrel of vinegar, which will never grow the sweeter for it.

*Scaliger.* Surely, you do not think in this fashion of the *New Testament* !

*Montaigne.* Who supposes it ? Whatever is mild and kindly is there. But Jack Calvin has thrown bird-lime and

vitriol upon it, and whoever but touches the cover dirties his fingers or burns them.

*Scaliger.* Calvin is a very great man, I do assure you, M. de Montaigne.

*Montaigne.* I do not like your great men who beckon me to them, call me their begotten, their dear child, and their entrails; and, if I happen to say on any occasion, "I beg leave, sir, to dissent a little from you," stamp and cry, "The devil you do!" and whistle to the executioner.

*Scaliger.* You exaggerate, my worthy friend!

*Montaigne.* Exaggerate do I, M. de l'Escale? What was it he did the other day to the poor devil there with an odd name?—Melancthon, I think it is.

*Scaliger.* I do not know: I have received no intelligence of late from Geneva.

*Montaigne.* It was but last night that our curate rode over from Lyons (he made two days of it, as you may suppose) and supped with me. He told me that Jack had got his old friend hanged and burned. I could not join him in the joke, for I find none such in the *New Testament*, on which he would have founded it; and, if it is one, it is not in my manner or to my taste.

*Scaliger.* I cannot well believe the report, my dear sir. He was rather urgent, indeed, on the combustion of the heretic Michael Servetus some years past.

*Montaigne.* A thousand to one, my spiritual guide mistook the name. He has heard of both, I warrant him, and thinks in his conscience that either is as good a roast as the other.

*Scaliger.* Theologians are proud and intolerant, and truly the farthest of all men from theology, if theology means the rational sense of religion, or indeed has anything to do with it in any way. Melancthon was the very best

of the reformers ; quiet, sedate, charitable, intrepid, firm in friendship, ardent in faith, acute in argument, and profound in learning.

*Montaigne.* Who cares about his argumentation or his learning, if he was the rest ?

*Scaliger.* I hope you will suspend your judgment on this affair until you receive some more certain and positive information.

*Montaigne.* I can believe it of the *Sieur Calvin*.

*Scaliger.* I cannot. *John Calvin* is a grave man, orderly and reasonable.

*Montaigne.* In my opinion he has not the order nor the reason of my cook. Mat never took a man for a sucking-pig, cleaning and scraping and buttering and roasting him ; nor ever twitched God by the sleeve and swore he should not have his own way.

*Scaliger.* *M. de Montaigne*, have you ever studied the doctrine of predestination ?

*Montaigne.* I should not understand it, if I had ; and I would not break through an old fence merely to get into a cavern. I would not give a fig or a fig-leaf to know the truth of it, as far as any man can teach it me. Would it make me honester or happier, or, in other things, wiser ?

*Scaliger.* I do not know whether it would materially.

*Montaigne.* I should be an egregious fool then to care about it. Our disputes on controverted points have filled the country with missionaries and cut-throats. Both parties have shown a disposition to turn this comfortable old house of mine into a fortress. If I had inclined to either, the other would have done it. Come walk about it with me ; after a ride, you can do nothing better to take off fatigue.

*Scaliger.* A most spacious kitchen !

*Montaigne.* Look up !



*Scaliger.* You have twenty or more fitches of bacon hanging there.

*Montaigne.* And if I had been a doctor or a captain, I should have had a cobweb and predestination in the place of them. Your soldiers of the *religion* on the one side, and of the *good old faith* on the other, would not have left unto me safe and sound even that good old woman there.

*Scaliger.* Oh yes they would, I hope.

*Old Woman.* Why dost giggle, Mat? What should he know about the business? He speaks mighty bad French, and is as spiteful as the devil. Praised be God, we have a kind master, who thinks about us, and feels for us.

*Scaliger.* Upon my word, M. de Montaigne, this gallery is an interesting one.

*Montaigne.* I can show you nothing but my house and my dairy. We have no chase in the month of May, you know,—unless you would like to bait the badger in the stable. This is rare sport in rainy days.

*Scaliger.* Are you in earnest, M. de Montaigne?

*Montaigne.* No, no, no, I cannot afford to worry him outright : only a little for pastime,—a morning's merriment for the dogs and wenches.

*Scaliger.* You really are then of so happy a temperament that, at your time of life, you can be amused by baiting a badger !

*Montaigne.* Why not? Your father, a wiser and graver and older man than I am, was amused by baiting a professor or critic. I have not a dog in the kennel that would treat the badger worse than brave Julius treated Cardan and Erasmus, and some dozens more. We are all childish, old as well as young ; and our very last tooth would fain stick, M. de l'Escale, in some tender place of a neighbour. Boys laugh at a person who falls in the dirt ;

men laugh rather when they make him fall, and most when the dirt is of their own laying.

Is not the gallery rather cold, after the kitchen? We must go through it to get into the court where I keep my tame rabbits; the stable is hard by: come along, come along.

*Scaliger.* Permit me to look a little at those banners. Some of them are old indeed.

*Montaigne.* Upon my word, I blush to think I never took notice how they are tattered. I have no fewer than three women in the house, and in a summer's evening, only two hours long, the worst of these rags might have been darned across.

*Scaliger.* You would not have done it surely!

*Montaigne.* I am not over-thrifty; the women might have been better employed. It is as well as it is then; ay?

*Scaliger.* I think so.

*Montaigne.* So be it.

*Scaliger.* They remind me of my own family, we being descended from the great Cane della Scala, Prince of Verona, and from the House of Hapsburg, as you must have heard from my father.

*Montaigne.* What signifies it to the world whether the great Cane was tied to his grandmother or not? As for the House of Hapsburg, if you could put together as many such houses as would make up a city larger than Cairo, they would not be worth his study, or a sheet of paper on the table of it.

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## BOCCACCIO AND PETRARCA.

*Boccaccio.* Remaining among us, I doubt not that you would soon receive the same distinctions in your native country as others have conferred upon you : indeed, in confidence I may promise it. For greatly are the Florentines ashamed that the most elegant of their writers and the most independent of their citizens lives in exile, by the injustice he had suffered in the detriment done to his property, through the intemperate administration of their laws.

*Petrarca.* Let them recall me soon and honourably : then perhaps I may assist them to remove their ignominy, which I carry about with me wherever I go, and which is pointed out by my exotic laurel.

*Boccaccio.* There is, and ever will be, in all countries and under all governments, an ostracism for their greatest men.

*Petrarca.* At present we will talk no more about it. To-morrow I pursue my journey towards Padua, where I am expected ; where some few value and esteem me, honest and learned and ingenious men ; although neither those Transpadane regions, nor whatever extends beyond them, have yet produced an equal to Boccaccio.

*Boccaccio.* Then, in the name of friendship, do not go thither !—form such rather from your fellow-citizens. I love my equals heartily ; and shall love them the better when I see them raised up here, from our own mother earth, by you.

*Petrarca.* Let us continue our walk.

*Boccaccio.* If you have been delighted (and you say you have been) at seeing again, after so long an absence, the

house and garden wherein I have placed the relaters of my stories, as reported in the *Decameron*, come a little way further up the ascent, and we will pass through the vineyard on the west of the villa. You will see presently another on the right, lying in its warm little garden close to the roadside, the scene lately of somewhat that would have looked well, as illustration, in the midst of your Latin reflections. It shows us that people the most serious and determined may act at last contrariwise to the line of conduct they have laid down.

*Petrarca.* Relate it to me, Messer Giovanni; for you are able to give reality the merits and charms of fiction, just as easily as you give fiction the semblance, the stature, and the movement of reality.

*Boccaccio.* I must here forego such powers, if in good truth I possess them.

*Petrarca.* This long green alley, defended by box and cypresses, is very pleasant. The smell of box, although not sweet, is more agreeable to me than many that are; I cannot say from what resuscitation of early and tender feeling. The cypress too seems to strengthen the nerves of the brain. Indeed, I delight in the odour of most trees and plants.

Will not that dog hurt us?—he comes closer.

*Boccaccio.* Dog! thou hast the colours of a magpie and the tongue of one; prythee be quiet: art thou not ashamed?

*Petrarca.* Verily he trots off, comforting his angry belly with his plenteous tail, flattened and bestrewn under it. He looks back, going on, and puffs out his upper lip without a bark.

*Boccaccio.* These creatures are more accessible to temperate and just rebuke than the creatures of our species, usually angry with less reason, and from no sense, as dogs are, of duty. Look into that white arcade! Surely it was

white the other day ; and now I perceive it is still so : the setting sun tinges it with yellow.

*Petrarca.* The house has nothing of either the rustic or the magnificent about it ; nothing quite regular, nothing much varied. If there is anything at all affecting, as I fear there is, in the story you are about to tell me, I could wish the edifice itself bore externally some little of the interesting that I might hereafter turn my mind toward it, looking out of the catastrophe, though not away from it. But I do not even find the peculiar and uncostly decoration of our Tuscan villas : the central turret, round which the kite perpetually circles in search of pigeons or smaller prey, borne onward, like the Flemish skater, by effortless will in motionless progression. The view of Fiesole must be lovely from that window ; but I fancy to myself it loses the cascade under the single high arch of the Mugnone.

*Boccaccio.* I think so. In this villa—come rather further off: the inhabitants of it may hear us, if they should happen to be in the harbour, as most people are at the present hour of day—in this villa, Messer Francesco, lives Monna Tita Monalda, who tenderly loved Amadeo degi Oricellari. She however was reserved and coy ; and Father Pietro de' Pucci, an enemy to the family of Amadeo, told her never more to think of him, for that, just before he knew her, he had thrown his arm round the neck of Nunciata Righi, his mother's maid, calling her most immodestly a sweet creature, and of a whiteness that marble would split with envy at.

Monna Tita trembled and turned pale. "Father, is the girl really so very fair?" said she anxiously.

"Madonna," replied the father, "after confession she is not much amiss : white she is, with a certain tint of pink not belonging to her, but coming over her as through the wing of

an angel pleased at the holy function ; and her breath is such, the very ear smells it : poor, innocent, sinful soul ! Hei ! The wretch, Amadeo, would have endangered her salvation."

"She must be a wicked girl to let him," said Monna Tita. "A young man of good parentage and education would not dare to do such a thing of his own accord. I will see him no more however. But it was before he knew me : and it may not be true. I cannot think any young woman would let a young man do so, even in the last hour before Lent. Now in what month was it supposed to be?"

"Supposed to be!" cried the father indignantly : "in June ; I say in June."

"Oh ! that now is quite impossible : for on the second of July, forty-one days from this, and at this very hour of it, he swore to me eternal love and constancy. I will inquire of him whether it is true : I will charge him with it."

She did. Amadeo confessed his fault, and, thinking it a venial one, would have taken and kissed her hand as he asked forgiveness.

*Petrarca.* Children ! children ! I will go into the house, and if their relatives, as I suppose, have approved of the marriage, I will endeavour to persuade the young lady that a fault like this, on the repentance of her lover, is not unpardonable. But first, is Amadeo a young man of loose habits ?

*Boccaccio.* Less than our others : in fact, I never heard of any deviation, excepting this.

*Petrarca.* Come then with me.

*Boccaccio.* Wait a little.

*Petrarca.* I hope the modest Tita, after a trial, will not be too severe with him.



*Boccaccio.* Severity is far from her nature ; but, such is her purity and innocence, she shed many and bitter tears at his confession, and declared her unalterable determination of taking the veil among the nuns of Fiesole. Amadeo fell at her feet, and wept upon them. She pushed him from her gently, and told him she would still love him if he would follow her example, leave the world, and become a friar of San Marco. Amadeo was speechless ; and, if he had not been so, he never would have made a promise he intended to violate. She retired from him. After a time he arose, less wounded than benumbed by the sharp uncovered stones in the garden-walk ; and, as a man who fears to fall from a precipice goes farther from it than is necessary, so did Amadeo shun the quarter where the gate is, and, oppressed by his agony and despair, throw his arms across the sun-dial and rest his brow upon it, hot as it must have been on a cloudless day in August. When the evening was about to close, he was aroused by the cries of rooks overhead ; they flew towards Florence, and beyond : he, too, went back into the city.

Tita fell sick from her inquietude. Every morning ere sunrise did Amadeo return ; but could hear only from the labourers in the field that Monna Tita was ill, because she had promised to take the veil and had not taken it, knowing, as she must do, that the heavenly bridegroom is a bridegroom never to be trifled with, let the spouse be young and beautiful as she may be. Amadeo had often conversed with the peasant of the farm, who much pitied so worthy and loving a gentleman ; and, finding him one evening fixing some thick and high stakes in the ground, offered to help him. After due thanks, "It is time," said the peasant, "to rebuild the hovel and watch the grapes."

"This is my house," cried he. "Could I never, in my

stupidity, think about rebuilding it before? Bring me another mat or two: I will sleep here to-night, to-morrow night, every night, all autumn, all winter."

He slept there, and was consoled at last by hearing that Monna Tita was out of danger, and recovering from her illness by spiritual means. His heart grew lighter day after day. Every evening did he observe the rooks, in the same order, pass along the same track in the heavens, just over San Marco; and it now occurred to him, after three weeks, indeed, that Monna Tita had perhaps some strange idea, in choosing his monastery, not unconnected with the passage of these birds. He grew calmer upon it, until he asked himself whether he might hope. In the midst of this half-meditation, half-dream, his whole frame was shaken by the voices, however low and gentle, of two monks, coming from the villa and approaching him. He would have concealed himself under this bank whereon we are standing; but they saw him, and called him by name. He now perceived that the younger of them was Guiberto Oddi, with whom he had been at school about six or seven years ago, and who admired him for his courage and frankness when he was almost a child.

"Do not let us mortify poor Amadeo," said Guiberto to his companion. "Return to the road: I will speak a few words to him, and engage him (I trust) to comply with reason and yield to necessity." The elder monk, who saw he should have to climb the hill again, assented to the proposal, and went into the road. After the first embraces and few words, "Amadeo! Amadeo!" said Guiberto, "it was love that made me a friar; let anything else make you one."

"Kind heart!" replied Amadeo. "If death or religion, or hatred of me, deprives me of Tita Monalda, I will die,

where she commanded me, in the cowl. It is you who prepare her, then, to throw away her life and mine!"

"Hold! Amadeo!" said Guiberto, "I officiate together with good Father Fontesecco, who invariably falls asleep amid our holy function."

Now, Messer Francesco, I must inform you that Father Fontesecco has the heart of a flower. It feels nothing, it wants nothing; it is pure and simple, and full of its own little light. Innocent as a child, as an angel, nothing ever troubled him but how to devise what he should confess. A confession costs him more trouble to invent than any *Giornata* in my *Decameron* cost me. He was once overheard to say on this occasion, "God forgive me in his infinite mercy, for making it appear that I am a little worse than he has chosen I should be!" He is temperate; for he never drinks more than exactly half the wine and water set before him. In fact, he drinks the wine and leaves the water, saying, "We have the same water up at San Domenico; we send it hither: it would be uncivil to take back our own gift, and still more to leave a suspicion that we thought other people's wine poor beverage." Being afflicted by the gravel, the physician of his convent advised him, as he never was fond of wine, to leave it off entirely; on which he said, "I know few things; but this I know well—in water there is often gravel, in wine never. It hath pleased God to afflict me, and even to go a little out of his way in order to do it, for the greater warning to other sinners. I will drink wine, brother Anselmini, and help his work."

I have led you away from the younger monk.

"While Father Fontesecco is in the first stage of beatitude, chanting through his nose the benedicite, I will attempt," said Guiberto, "to comfort Monna Tita."

“Good, blessed Guiberto!” exclaimed Amadeo in a transport of gratitude, at which Guiberto smiled with his usual grace and suavity. “O Guiberto! Guiberto! my heart is breaking. Why should she want you to comfort her?—but—comfort her then!” and he covered his face within his hands.

“Remember,” said Guiberto placidly, “her uncle is bed-ridden; her aunt never leaves him; the servants are old and sullen, and will stir for nobody. Finding her resolved, as they believe, to become a nun, they are little assiduous in their services. Humour her, if none else does, Amadeo; let her fancy that you intend to be a friar; and, for the present, walk not on these grounds.”

“Are you true, or are you traitorous?” cried Amadeo, grasping his friend’s hand most fiercely.

“Follow your own counsel, if you think mine insincere,” said the young friar, not withdrawing his hand, but placing the other on Amadeo’s. “Let me, however, advise you to conceal yourself; and I will direct Silvestrina to bring you such accounts of her mistress as may at least make you easy in regard to her health. Adieu.”

Amadeo was now rather tranquil; more than he had ever been, not only since the displeasure of Monna Tita, but since the first sight of her. Profuse at all times in his gratitude to Silvestrina, whenever she brought him good news, news better than usual, he pressed her to his bosom. Silvestrina Pioppi is about fifteen, slender, fresh, intelligent, lively, good-humoured, sensitive; and any one but Amadeo might call her very pretty.

*Petrarca.* Ah, Giovanni! here I find your heart obtaining the mastery over your vivid and volatile imagination. Well have you said, the maiden being really pretty, any one but

Amadeo might think her so. On the banks of the Sorga there are beautiful maids ; the woods and the rocks have a thousand times repeated it. I heard but one echo ; I heard but one name : I would have fled from them for ever at another.

*Boccaccio.* Francesco, do not beat your breast just now : wait a little. Monna Tita would take the veil. The fatal certainty was announced to Amadeo by his true Guiberto, who had earnestly and repeatedly prayed her to consider the thing a few months longer.

"I will see her first ! By all the saints of heaven I will see her !" cried the desperate Amadeo, and ran into the house, toward the still apartment of his beloved. Fortunately Guiberto was neither less active nor less strong than he, and overtaking him at the moment, drew him into the room opposite. "If you will be quiet and reasonable, there is yet a possibility left you," said Guiberto in his ear, although perhaps he did not think it. "But if you utter a voice or are seen by any one, you ruin the fame of her you love, and obstruct your own prospects for ever. It being known that you have not slept in Florence these several nights, it will be suspected by the malicious that you have slept in the villa with the connivance of Monna Tita. Compose yourself ; answer nothing ; rest where you are : do not add a worse imprudence to a very bad one. I promise you my assistance, my speedy return, and best counsel : you shall be released at daybreak." He ordered Silvestrina to supply the unfortunate youth with the cordials usually administered to the uncle, or with the rich old wine they were made of ; and she performed the order with such promptitude and attention, that he was soon in some sort refreshed.

*Petrarca.* I pity him from my innermost heart, poor



young man ! Alas, we are none of us, by original sin, free from infirmities or from vices.

*Boccaccio.* If we could find a man exempt by nature from vices and infirmities, we should find one not worth knowing : he would also be void of tenderness and compassion. What allowances then could his best friends expect from him in their frailties ? What help, consolation, and assistance in their misfortunes ? We are in the midst of a workshop well stored with sharp instruments : we may do ill with many, unless we take heed ; and good with all, if we will but learn how to employ them.

*Petrarca.* There is somewhat of reason in this. You strengthen me to proceed with you : I can bear the rest.

*Boccaccio.* Guiberto had taken leave of his friend, and had advanced a quarter of a mile, which (as you perceive) is nearly the whole way, on his return to the monastery, when he was overtaken by some peasants who were hastening homeward from Florence. The information he collected from them made him determine to retrace his steps. He entered the room again, and, from the intelligence he had just acquired, gave Amadeo the assurance that Monna Tita must delay her entrance into the convent ; for that the abbess had that moment gone down the hill on her way toward Siena to venerate some holy relics, carrying with her three candles, each five feet long, to burn before them ; which candles contained many particles of the myrrh presented at the nativity of our Saviour by the wise men of the East. Amadeo breathed freely, and was persuaded by Guiberto to take another cup of old wine, and to eat with him some cold roast kid, which had been offered him for *merenda*.\* After the agitation of his mind a heavy sleep

\* *Merenda* is luncheon—*meridiana*—eaten by the wealthier at the hour when the peasants dine.



fell upon the lover, coming almost before Guiberto departed: so heavy indeed that Silvestrina was alarmed. It was her apartment; and she performed the honours of it as well as any lady in Florence could have done.

*Petrarca.* I easily believe it: the poor are more attentive than the rich, and the young are more compassionate than the old.

*Boccaccio.* O Francesco! what inconsistent creatures are we!

*Petrarca.* True, indeed! I now foresee the end. He might have done worse.

*Boccaccio.* I think so.

*Petrarca.* He almost deserved it.

*Boccaccio.* I think that too.

*Petrarca.* Wretched mortals! our passions for ever lead us into this, or worse.

*Boccaccio.* Ay, truly; much worse generally.

*Petrarca.* The very twig on which the flowers grew lately scourges us to the bone in its maturity.

*Boccaccio.* Incredible will it be to you, and, by my faith, to me it was hardly credible. Certain however is it, that Guiberto on his return by sunrise found Amadeo in the arms of sleep.

*Petrarca.* Not at all, not at all: the truest lover might suffer and act as he did.

*Boccaccio.* But, Francesco, there was another pair of arms about him, worth twenty such, divinity as he is. A loud burst of laughter from Guiberto did not arouse either of the parties; but Monna Tita heard it, and rushed into the room, tearing her hair, and invoking the saints of heaven against the perfidy of man. She seized Silvestrina by that arm which appeared the most offending: the girl opened her eyes, turned on her face, rolled out of bed, and

threw herself at the feet of her mistress, shedding tears, and wiping them away with the only piece of linen about her. Monna Tita too shed tears. Amadeo still slept profoundly; a flush, almost of crimson, overspreading his cheeks. Monna Tita led away, after some pause, poor Silvestrina, and made her confess the whole. She then wept more and more, and made the girl confess it again, and explain her confession. "I cannot believe such wickedness," she cried: "he could not be so hardened. O sinful Silvestrina! how will you ever tell Father Doni one half, one quarter? He never can absolve you."

*Petrarca.* Giovanni, I am glad I did not enter the house; you were prudent in restraining me. I have no pity for the youth at all: never did one so deserve to lose a mistress.

*Boccaccio.* Say, rather, to gain a wife.

*Petrarca.* Absurdity! impossibility!

*Boccaccio.* He won her fairly; strangely, and on a strange table, as he played his game. Listen! that guitar is Monna Tita's. Listen! what a fine voice (do not you think it?) is Amadeo's.

*Amadeo (singing).*

Oh, I have err'd!  
I laid my hand upon the nest  
(Tita, I sigh to sing the rest)  
Of the wrong bird.

*Petrarca.* She laughs too at it! Ah! Monna Tita was made by nature to live on this side of Fiesole.



## METELLUS AND MARIUS.

[ At the siege of Numantia the Roman tribune Metellus commands the centurion Marius to mount the walls and describe what he sees.]

*Metellus.* Well met, Caius Marius! My orders are to find instantly a centurion who shall mount the walls; one capable of observation, acute in remark, prompt, calm, active, intrepid. The Numantians are sacrificing to the gods in secrecy; they have sounded the horn once only,—and hoarsely and low and mournfully.

*Marius.* Was that ladder I see yonder among the caperbushes and purple lilies, under where the fig-tree grows out of the rampart, left for me?

*Metellus.* Even so, wert thou willing. Wouldst thou mount it?

*Marius.* Rejoicingly. If none are below or near, may I explore the state of things by entering the city?

*Metellus.* Use thy discretion in that.

What seest thou? Wouldst thou leap down? Lift the ladder.

*Marius.* Are there spikes in it where it sticks in the turf? I should slip else.

*Metellus.* How! bravest of our centurions, art even thou afraid? Seest thou any one by?

*Marius.* Ay; some hundreds close beneath me.

*Metellus.* Retire, then. Hasten back; I will protect thy descent.

*Marius.* May I speak, O Metellus, without an offence to discipline?

*Metellus.* Say.

*Marius.* Listen! Dost thou not hear?

*Metellus.* Shame on thee! alight, alight! my shield shall cover thee.

*Marius.* There is a murmur like the hum of bees in the bean-field of Cereate; for the sun is hot, and the ground is thirsty. When will it have drunk up for me the blood that has run, and is yet oozing on it, from those fresh bodies!

*Metellus.* How! We have not fought for many days; what bodies, then, are fresh ones?

*Marius.* Close beneath the wall are those of infants and of girls; in the middle of the road are youths, emaciated; some either unwounded or wounded months ago; some on their spears, others on their swords: no few have received in mutual death the last interchange of friendship; their daggers unite them, hilt to hilt, bosom to bosom.

*Metellus.* Mark rather the living,—what are they about?

*Marius.* About the sacrifice, which portends them, I conjecture, but little good,—it burns sullenly and slowly. The victim will lie upon the pyre till morning, and still be unconsumed, unless they bring more fuel.

I will leap down and walk on cautiously, and return with tidings, if death should spare me.

Never was any race of mortals so unmilitary as these Numantians; no watch, no stations, no palisades across the streets.

*Metellus.* Did they want, then, all the wood for the altar?

*Marius.* It appears so—I will return anon.

*Metellus.* The gods speed thee, my brave, honest Marius!

*Marius (returned).* The ladder should have been better spiked for that slippery ground. I am down again safe, however. Here a man may walk securely, and without picking his steps.

*Metellus.* Tell me, Caius, what thou sawest.

*Marius.* The streets of Numantia.

*Metellus.* Doubtless ; but what else ?

*Marius.* The temples and markets and places of exercise and fountains.

*Metellus.* Art thou crazed, centurion ? what more ? Speak plainly, at once, and briefly.

*Marius.* I beheld, then, all Numantia.

*Metellus.* Has terror maddened thee ? hast thou descried nothing of the inhabitants but those carcasses under the ramparts ?

*Marius.* Those, O Metellus, lie scattered, although not indeed far asunder. The greater part of the soldiers and citizens—of the fathers, husbands, widows, wives, espoused—were assembled together.

*Metellus.* About the altar ?

*Marius.* Upon it.

*Metellus.* So busy and earnest in devotion ! but how all upon it ?

*Marius.* It blazed under them, and over them, and round about them.

*Metellus.* Immortal gods ! Art thou sane, Caius Marius ? Thy visage is scorched : thy speech may wander after such an enterprise ; thy shield burns my hand.

*Marius.* I thought it had cooled again. Why, truly, it seems hot : I now feel it.

*Metellus.* Wipe off those embers.

*Marius.* 'Twere better : there will be none opposite to shake them upon, for some time.

The funereal horn, that sounded with such feebleness, sounded not so from the faint heart of him who blew it. Him I saw ; him only of the living. Should I say it ? there was another : there was one child whom its parent could not kill, could not part from. She had hidden it in her robe, I

suspect; and, when the fire had reached it, either it shrieked or she did. For suddenly a cry pierced through the crackling pinewood, and something of round in figure fell from brand to brand, until it reached the pavement, at the feet of him who had blown the horn. I rushed toward him, for I wanted to hear the whole story, and felt the pressure of time. Condemn not my weakness, O Cæcilius! I wished an enemy to live an hour longer; for my orders were to explore and bring intelligence. When I gazed on him, in height almost gigantic, I wondered not that the blast of his trumpet was so weak: rather did I wonder that Famine, whose hand had indented every limb and feature, had left him any voice articulate. I rushed toward him, however, ere my eyes had measured either his form or strength. He held the child against me, and staggered under it.

"Behold," he exclaimed, "the glorious ornament of a Roman triumph!"

I stood horror-stricken; when suddenly drops, as of rain, pattered down from the pyre. I looked; and many were the precious stones, many were the amulets and rings and bracelets, and other barbaric ornaments, unknown to me in form or purpose, that tinkled on the hardened and black branches, from mothers and wives and betrothed maids; and some, too, I can imagine, from robuster arms—things of joyance, won in battle. The crowd of incumbent bodies was so dense and heavy, that neither the fire nor the smoke could penetrate upward from among them; and they sank, whole and at once, into the smouldering cavern eating out below. He at whose neck hung the trumpet felt this, and started.

"There is yet room," he cried, "and there is strength enough yet, both in the element and in me."



He extended his withered arms, he thrust forward the gaunt links of his throat, and upon gnarled knees, that smote each other audibly, tottered into the civic fire. It—like some hungry and strangest beast on the innermost wild of Africa, pierced, broken, prostrate, motionless, gazed at by its hunter in the impatience of glory, in the delight of awe—panted once more, and seized him.

I have seen within this hour, O Metellus, what Rome in the cycle of her triumphs will never see, what the Sun in his eternal course can never show her, what the Earth has borne but now, and must never rear again for her, what Victory herself has envied her,—a Numantian.

*Metellus.* We shall feast to-morrow. Hope, Caius Marius, to become a tribune : trust in fortune.

*Marius.* Auguries are surer : surest of all is perseverance.

*Metellus.* I hope the wine has not grown vapid in my tent : I have kept it waiting, and must now report to Scipio the intelligence of our discovery. Come after me, Caius.

*Marius (alone).* The tribune is the discoverer ! the centurion is the scout ! Caius Marius must enter more Numantias. Light-hearted Cæcilius, thou mayest perhaps hereafter, and not with humbled but with exulting pride, take orders from this hand. If Scipio's words are fate, and to me they sound so, the portals of the Capitol may shake before my chariot, as my horses plunge back at the applauses of the people, and Jove in his high domicile may welcome the citizen of Arpinum.



## BOSSUET AND THE DUCHESS DE FONTANGES.

[The Abbé de Choisy says that the Duchess was "*belle comme un ange, mais sottie comme un panier.*" This is perhaps the most successful of Landor's playful dialogues.]

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle, it is the King's desire that I compliment you on the elevation you have attained.

*Fontanges.* O monseigneur, I know very well what you mean. His Majesty is kind and polite to everybody. The last thing he said to me was, "Angélique ! do not forget to compliment Monseigneur the Bishop on the dignity I have conferred upon him, of almoner to the Dauphiness. I desired the appointment for him only that he might be of rank sufficient to confess you, now you are Duchess. Let him be your confessor, my little girl."

*Bossuet.* I dare not presume to ask you, mademoiselle, what was your gracious reply to the condescension of our royal master.

*Fontanges.* Oh, yes ! you may. I told him I was almost sure I should be ashamed of confessing such naughty things to a person of high rank, who writes like an angel.

*Bossuet.* The observation was inspired, mademoiselle, by your goodness and modesty.

*Fontanges.* You are so agreeable a man, monseigneur, I will confess to you, directly, if you like.

*Bossuet.* Have you brought yourself to a proper frame of mind, young lady ?

*Fontanges.* What is that ?

*Bossuet.* Do you hate sin ?

*Fontanges.* Very much.

*Bossuet.* Are you resolved to leave it off?

*Fontanges.* I have left it off entirely since the King began to love me. I have never said a spiteful word of anybody since.

*Bossuet.* In your opinion, mademoiselle, are there no other sins than malice?

*Fontanges.* I never stole anything; I never committed adultery; I never coveted my neighbour's wife; I never killed any person, though several have told me they should die for me.

*Bossuet.* Vain, idle talk! Did you listen to it?

*Fontanges.* Indeed I did, with both ears; it seemed so funny.

*Bossuet.* You have something to answer for, then.

*Fontanges.* No, indeed, I have not, monseigneur. I have asked many times after them, and found they were all alive, which mortified me.

*Bossuet.* So, then! you would really have them die for you?

*Fontanges.* Oh, no, no! but I wanted to see whether they were in earnest, or told me fibs; for, if they told me fibs, I would never trust them again.

*Bossuet.* Do you hate the world, mademoiselle?

*Fontanges.* A good deal of it: all Picardy, for example, and all Sologne; nothing is uglier—and, oh my life! what frightful men and women!

*Bossuet.* I would say, in plain language, do you hate the flesh and the Devil?

*Fontanges.* Who does not hate the Devil? If you will hold my hand the while, I will tell him so.—I hate you, beast! There now. As for flesh, I never could bear a fat

man. Such people can neither dance nor hunt, nor do anything that I know of.

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle Marie-Angélique de Scoraille de Rousille, Duchess de Fontanges! do you hate titles and dignities and yourself?

*Fontanges.* Myself! does anyone hate me? Why should I be the first? Hatred is the worst thing in the world: it makes one so very ugly.

*Bossuet.* To love God, we must hate ourselves. We must detest our bodies, if we would save our souls.

*Fontanges.* That is hard: how can I do it? I see nothing so detestable in mine. Do you? To love is easier. I love God whenever I think of him, he has been so very good to me; but I cannot hate myself, if I would. As God hath not hated me, why should I? Beside, it was he who made the King to love me; for I heard you say in a sermon that the hearts of kings are in his rule and governance. As for titles and dignities, I do not care much about them while His Majesty loves me, and calls me his Angélique. They make people more civil about us; and therefore it must be a simpleton who hates or disregards them, and a hypocrite who pretends it. I am glad to be a duchess. Manon and Lisette have never tied my garter so as to hurt me since, nor has the mischievous old La Grange said anything cross or bold: on the contrary, she told me what a fine colour and what a plumpness it gave me. Would not you rather be a duchess than a waiting-maid or a nun, if the King gave you your choice?

*Bossuet.* Pardon me, mademoiselle, I am confounded at the levity of your question.

*Fontanges.* I am in earnest, as you see.

*Bossuet.* Flattery will come before you in other and more dangerous forms: you will be commended for excellences

which do not belong to you ; and this you will find as injurious to your repose as to your virtue. An ingenuous mind feels in unmerited praise the bitterest reproof. If you reject it, you are unhappy ; if you accept it, you are undone. The compliments of a king are of themselves sufficient to pervert your intellect.

*Fontanges.* There you are mistaken twice over. It is not my person that pleases him so greatly : it is my spirit, my wit, my talents, my genius, and that very thing which you have mentioned—what was it ? my intellect. He never complimented me the least upon my beauty. Others have said that I am the most beautiful young creature under heaven ; a blossom of Paradise, a nymph, an angel ; worth (let me whisper it in your ear—do I lean too hard ?) a thousand Montespons. But His Majesty never said more on the occasion than that I was *imparagonable* ! (what is that ?) and that he adored me ; holding my hand and sitting quite still, when he might have romped with me and kissed me.

*Bossuet.* I would aspire to the glory of converting you.

*Fontanges.* You may do anything with me but convert me : you must not do that ; I am a Catholic born. M. de Turenne and Mademoiselle de Duras were heretics : you did right there. The King told the chancellor that he prepared them, that the business was arranged for you, and that you had nothing to do but get ready the arguments and responses, which you did gallantly—did not you ? And yet Mademoiselle de Duras was very awkward for a long while afterwards in crossing herself, and was once remarked to beat her breast in the litany with the points of two fingers at a time, when every one is taught to use only the second, whether it has a ring upon it or not. I am sorry she did so ; for people might think her insincere

in her conversion, and pretend that she kept a finger for each religion.

*Bossuet.* It would be as uncharitable to doubt the conviction of Mademoiselle de Duras as that of M. le Maréchal.

*Fontanges.* I have heard some fine verses, I can assure you, monseigneur, in which you are called the conqueror of Turenne. I should like to have been his conqueror myself, he was so great a man. I understand that you have lately done a much more difficult thing.

*Bossuet.* To what do you refer, mademoiselle ?

*Fontanges.* That you have overcome quietism. Now, in the name of wonder, how could you manage that ?

*Bossuet.* By the grace of God.

*Fontanges.* Yes, indeed ; but never until now did God give any preacher so much of his grace as to subdue this pest.

*Bossuet.* It has appeared among us but lately.

*Fontanges.* Oh, dear me ! I have always been subject to it dreadfully, from a child.

*Bossuet.* Really ! I never heard so.

*Fontanges.* I checked myself as well as I could, although they constantly told me I looked well in it.

*Bossuet.* In what, mademoiselle ?

*Fontanges.* In quietism ; that is, when I fell asleep at sermon-time. I am ashamed that such a learned and pious man as M. de Fénélon should incline to it, as they say he does.

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle, you quite mistake the matter.

*Fontanges.* Is not then M. de Fénélon thought a very pious and learned person ?

*Bossuet.* And justly.

*Fontanges.* I have read a great way in a romance he



has begun, about a knight-errant in search of a father. The King says there are many such about his court; but I never saw them nor heard of them before. The Marchioness de la Motte, his relative, brought it to me, written out in a charming hand, as much as the copy-book would hold; and I got through, I know not how far. If he had gone on with the nymphs in the grotto, I never should have been tired of him; but he quite forgot his own story, and left them at once; in a hurry (I suppose) to set out upon his mission to Saintonge in the *pays de d'Aunis*, where the King has promised him a famous *heretic-hunt*. He is, I do assure you, a wonderful creature: he understands so much Latin and Greek, and knows all the tricks of the sorceresses. Yet you keep him under.

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle, if you really have anything to confess, and if you desire that I should have the honour of absolving you, it would be better to proceed in it, than to oppress me with unmerited eulogies on my humble labours.

*Fontanges.* You must first direct me, monseigneur: I have nothing particular. The King assures me there is no harm whatever in his love toward me.

*Bossuet.* That depends on your thoughts at the moment. If you abstract the mind from the body, and turn your heart toward heaven——

*Fontanges.* O monseigneur, I always did so—every time but once—you quite make me blush. Let us converse about something else, or I shall grow too serious, just as you made me the other day at the funeral sermon. And now let me tell you, my Lord, you compose such pretty funeral sermons, I hope I shall have the pleasure of hearing you preach mine.

*Bossuet.* Rather let us hope, mademoiselle, that the hour is yet far distant when so melancholy a service will be

performed for you. May he who is unborn be the sad announcer of your departure hence ! \* May he indicate to those around him many virtues not perhaps yet full-blown in you, and point triumphantly to many faults and foibles checked by you in their early growth, and lying dead on the open road you shall have left behind you ! To me the painful duty will, I trust, be spared : I am advanced in age ; you are a child.

*Fontanges.* Oh, no ! I am seventeen.

*Bossuet.* I should have supposed you younger by two years at least. But do you collect nothing from your own reflection, which raises so many in my breast ? You think it possible that I, aged as I am, may preach a sermon on your funeral. We say that our days are few ; and saying it, we say too much. Marie Angélique, we have but one : the past are not ours, and who can promise us the future ? This in which we live is ours only while we live in it ; the next moment may stike it off from us ; the next sentence I would utter may be broken and fall between us.† The beauty that has made a thousand hearts to beat at one instant, at the succeeding has been without pulse and colour, without admirer, friend, companion, follower. She by whose eyes the march of victory shall have been directed, whose name shall have animated armies at the extremities

\* Bossuet was in his fifty-fourth year ; Mademoiselle de Fontanges died in child-bed the year following : he survived her twenty-three.

† Though Bossuet was capable of uttering and even of feeling such a sentiment, his conduct towards Fénelon, the fairest apparition that Christianity ever presented, was ungenerous and unjust.

While the diocese of Cambray was ravaged by Louis, it was spared by Marlborough ; who said to the Archbishop that, if he was sorry he had not taken Cambray, it was chiefly because he lost for a time the pleasure of visiting so great a man. Peterborough, the next of our generals in glory, paid his respects to him some years afterward.

of the earth, drops into one of its crevices and mingles with its dust. Duchess de Fontanges ! think on this ! Lady ! so live as to think on it undisturbed !

*Fontanges.* O God ! I am quite alarmed. Do not talk thus gravely. It is in vain that you speak to me in so sweet a voice. I am frightened even at the rattle of the beads about my neck : take them off, and let us talk on other things. What was it that dropped on the floor as you were speaking ? It seemed to shake the room, though it sounded like a pin or button.

*Bossuet.* Leave it there !

*Fontanges.* Your ring fell from your hand, my Lord Bishop ! How quick you are ! Could not you have trusted me to pick it up ?

*Bossuet.* Madame is too condescending : had this happened, I should have been overwhelmed with confusion. My hand is shrivelled : the ring has ceased to fit it. A mere accident may draw us into perdition ; a mere accident may bestow on us the means of grace. A pebble has moved you more than my words.

*Fontanges.* It pleases me vastly : I admire rubies. I will ask the King for one exactly like it. This is the time he usually comes from the chase. I am sorry you cannot be present to hear how prettily I shall ask him : but that is impossible, you know ; for I shall do it just when I am certain he would give me anything. He said so himself : he said but yesterday—

“ Such a sweet creature is worth a world : ”

and no actor on the stage was more like a king than His Majesty was when he spoke it, if he had but kept his wig and robe on. And yet you know he is rather stiff and

wrinkled for so great a monarch ; and his eyes, I am afraid, are beginning to fail him, he looks so close at things.

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle, such is the duty of a prince who desires to conciliate our regard and love.

*Fontanges.* Well, I think so too, though I did not like it in him at first. I am sure he will order the ring for me, and I will confess to you with it upon my finger. But first I must be cautious and particular to know of him how much it is his royal will that I should say.

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## JOHN OF GAUNT AND JOANNA OF KENT.

[“Joanna, called the Fair Maid of Kent, was cousin of the Black Prince, whom she married. John of Gaunt was suspected of aiming at the crown in the beginning of Richard’s minority, which, increasing the hatred of the people against him for favouring the sect of Wickliffe, excited them to demolish his house and to demand his impeachment.” In this dialogue Landor embodies his ideal of medieval chivalry.]

*Joanna.* How is this, my cousin, that you are besieged in your own house, by the citizens of London ? I thought you were their idol.

*Gaunt.* If their idol, madam, I am one which they may tread on as they list when down ; but which, by my soul and knighthood ! the ten best battle-axes among them shall find it hard work to unshrine.

Pardon me : I have no right perhaps to take or touch this hand ; yet, my sister, bricks and stones and arrows are not presents fit for you. Let me conduct you some paces hence.

*Joanna.* I will speak to those below in the street. Quit my hand: they shall obey me.

*Gaunt.* If you intend to order my death, madam, your guards who have entered my court, and whose spurs and halberts I hear upon the staircase, may overpower my domestics; and, seeing no such escape as becomes my dignity, I submit to you. Behold my sword and gauntlet at your feet! Some formalities, I trust, will be used in the proceedings against me. Entitle me, in my attainder, not John of Gaunt, not Duke of Lancaster, not King of Castile; nor commemorate my father, the most glorious of princes, the vanquisher and pardoner of the most powerful; nor style me, what those who loved or who flattered me did when I was happier, cousin to the Fair Maid of Kent. Joanna, those days are over! But no enemy, no law, no eternity can take away from me, or move further off, my affinity in blood to the conqueror in the field of Crecy, of Poitiers, and Najora. Edward was my brother when he was but your cousin; and the edge of my shield has clinked on his in many a battle. Yes, we were ever near—if not in worth, in danger. She weeps.

*Joanna.* Attainder! God avert it! Duke of Lancaster, what dark thought—alas! that the Regency should have known it! I came hither, sir, for no such purpose as to ensnare or incriminate or alarm you.

These weeds might surely have protected me from the fresh tears you have drawn forth.

*Gaunt.* Sister, be comforted! this visor, too, has felt them.

*Joanna.* O my Edward! my own so lately! Thy memory—thy beloved image—which never hath abandoned me, makes me bold: I dare not say “generous;” for in saying it I should cease to be so—and who could be called

generous by the side of thee? I will rescue from perdition the enemy of my son.

Cousin, you loved your brother. Love, then, what was dearer to him than his life: protect what he, valiant as you have seen him, cannot! The father, who foiled so many, hath left no enemies; the innocent child, who can injure no one, finds them!

Why have you unlaced and laid aside your visor? Do not expose your body to those missiles. Hold your shield before yourself, and step aside. I need it not. I am resolved——

*Gaunt.* On what, my cousin? Speak, and, by the saints! it shall be done. This breast is your shield; this arm is mine.

*Joanna.* Heavens! who could have hurled those masses of stone from below? they stunned me. Did they descend all of them together; or did they split into fragments on hitting the pavement?

*Gaunt.* Truly, I was not looking that way: they came, I must believe, while you were speaking.

*Joanna.* Aside, aside! further back! disregard me! Look! that last arrow sticks half its head deep in the wainscot. It shook so violently I did not see the feather at first.

No, no, Lancaster! I will not permit it. Take your shield up again; and keep it all before you. Now step aside: I am resolved to prove whether the people will hear me.

*Gaunt.* Then, madam, by your leave——

*Joanna.* Hold!

*Gaunt.* Villains! take back to your kitchens those spits and skewers that you, forsooth, would fain call swords and arrows; and keep your bricks and stones for your graves!



*Joanna.* Imprudent man! who can save you? I shall be frightened: I must speak at once.

O good kind people! ye who so greatly loved me, when I am sure I had done nothing to deserve it, have I (unhappy me!) no merit with you now, when I would assuage your anger, protect your fair fame, and send you home contented with yourselves and me? Who is he, worthy citizens, whom ye would drag to slaughter?

True, indeed, he did revile some one. Neither I nor you can say whom—some feaster and rioter, it seems, who had little right (he thought) to carry sword or bow, and who, to show it, hath slunk away. And then another raised his anger: he was indignant that, under his roof, a woman should be exposed to stoning. Which of you would not be as cholerick in a like affront? In the house of which among you should I not be protected as resolutely?

No, no: I never can believe those angry cries. Let none ever tell me again he is the enemy of my son, of his king, your darling child, Richard. Are your fears more lively than a poor weak female's? than a mother's? yours, whom he hath so often led to victory, and praised to his father, naming each—he, John of Gaunt, the defender of the helpless, the comforter of the desolate, the rallying signal of the desperately brave!

Retire, Duke of Lancaster! This is no time——

*Gaunt.* Madam, I obey; but not through terror of that puddle at the house-door, which my handful of dust would dry up. Deign to command me!

*Joanna.* In the name of my son, then, retire!

*Gaunt.* Angelic goodness! I must fairly win it.

*Joanna.* I think I know his voice that crieth out, "Who will answer for him?" An honest and loyal man's, one

who would counsel and save me in any difficulty and danger. With what pleasure and satisfaction, with what perfect joy and confidence, do I answer our right-trusty and well-judging friend !

“Let Lancaster bring his sureties,” say you, “and we separate.” A moment yet before we separate ; if I might delay you so long, to receive your sanction of those securities : for, in such grave matters, it would ill become us to be over-hasty. I could bring fifty, I could bring a hundred, not from among soldiers, not from among courtiers ; but selected from yourselves, were it equitable and fair to show such partialities, or decorous in the parent and guardian of a king to offer any other than herself.

Raised by the hand of the Almighty from amidst you, but still one of you, if the mother of a family is a part of it, here I stand surety for John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, for his loyalty and allegiance.

*Gaunt* (*running back toward Joanna*). Are the rioters, then, bursting into the chamber through the windows ?

*Joanna*. The windows and doors of this solid edifice rattled and shook at the people’s acclamation. My word is given for you : this was theirs in return. Lancaster ! what a voice have the people when they speak out ! It shakes me with astonishment, almost with consternation, while it establishes the throne : what must it be when it is lifted up in vengeance !

*Gaunt*. Wind ; vapour——

*Joanna*. Which none can wield nor hold. Need I say this to my cousin of Lancaster ?

*Gaunt*. Rather say, madam, that there is always one star above which can tranquillise and control them.

*Joanna*. Go, cousin ! another time more sincerity !

*Gaunt*. You have this day saved my life from the

people ; for I now see my danger better, when it is no longer close before me. My Christ ! if ever I forget——

*Joanna.* Swear not : every man in England hath sworn what you would swear. But if you abandon my Richard, my brave and beautiful child, may—Oh ! I could never curse, nor wish an evil ; but, if you desert him in the hour of need, you will think of those who have not deserted you, and your own great heart will lie heavy on you, Lancaster !

Am I graver than I ought to be, that you look dejected ? Come, then, gentle cousin, lead me to my horse, and accompany me home. Richard will embrace us tenderly. Every one is dear to every other upon rising out fresh from peril ; affectionately then will he look, sweet boy, upon his mother and his uncle ! Never mind how many questions he may ask you, nor how strange ones. His only displeasure, if he has any, will be that he stood not against the rioters or among them.

*Gaunt.* Older than he have been as fond of mischief, and as fickle in the choice of a party.

I shall tell him that, coming to blows, the assailant is often in the right ; that the assailed is always.

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## LADY LISLE AND ELIZABETH GAUNT.

[Burnet relates from William Penn, who was present, that Elizabeth Gaunt placed the faggots round her body with her own hands. Lady Lisle was not burnt alive, though sentenced to it ; but hanged and beheaded.]

*Lady Lisle.* Madam, I am confident you will pardon me ; for affliction teaches forgiveness.

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* From the cell of the condemned we are going, unless my hopes mislead me, where alone we can receive it.

Tell me, I beseech you, lady ! in what matter or manner do you think you can have offended a poor sinner such as I am. Surely we come into this dismal place for our offences ; and it is not here that any can be given or taken.

*Lady Lisle.* Just now, when I entered the prison, I saw your countenance serene and cheerful ; you looked upon me for a time with an unaltered eye ; you turned away from me, as I fancied, only to utter some expressions of devotion ; and again you looked upon me, and tears rolled down your face. Alas that I should, by any circumstance, any action, or recollection, make another unhappy ! Alas that I should deepen the gloom in the very shadow of death !

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* Be comforted : you have not done it. Grief softens and melts and flows away with tears.

I wept because another was greatly more wretched than myself. I wept at that black attire—at that attire of modesty and of widowhood.

*Lady Lisle.* It covers a wounded, almost a broken heart—an unworthy offering to our blessed Redeemer.

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* In his name let us now rejoice ! Let us offer our prayers and our thanks at once together ! We may yield up our souls, perhaps, at the same hour.

*Lady Lisle.* Is mine so pure ? Have I bemoaned, as I should have done, the faults I have committed ? Have my sighs arisen for the unmerited mercies of my God ; and not rather for him, the beloved of my heart, the adviser and sustainer I have lost ?

Open, O gates of Death !

Smile on me, approve my last action in this world, O

virtuous husband! O saint and martyr! my brave, compassionate, and loving Lisle!

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* And cannot you, too, smile, sweet lady? Are not you with him even now? Doth body, doth clay, doth air, separate and estrange free spirits? Bethink you of his gladness, of his glory; and begin to partake them.

Oh! how could an Englishman, how could twelve, condemn to death—condemn to so great an evil as they thought it and may find it—this innocent and helpless widow?

*Lady Lisle.* Blame not *that* jury!—blame not the jury which brought against me the verdict of guilty. I was so: I received in my house a wanderer who had fought under the rash and giddy Monmouth. He was hungry and thirsty, and I took him in. My Saviour had commanded, my King had forbidden it.

Yet the twelve would not have delivered me over to death, unless the judge had threatened them with an accusation of treason in default of it. Terror made them unanimous: they redeemed their properties and lives at the stated price.

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* I hope, at least, the unfortunate man whom you received in the hour of danger may avoid his penalty.

*Lady Lisle.* Let us hope it.

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* I, too, am imprisoned for the same offence; and I have little expectation that he who was concealed by me hath any chance of happiness, although he hath escaped. Could I find the means of conveying to him a small pittance, I should leave the world the more comfortably.

*Lady Lisle.* Trust in God; not in one thing or another,

but in all. Resign the care of this wanderer to *his* guidance.

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* He abandoned that guidance.

*Lady Lisle.* Unfortunate ! how can money then avail him ?

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* It might save him from distress and from despair, from the taunts of the hard-hearted, and from the inclemency of the godly.

*Lady Lisle.* In godliness, O my friend ! there cannot be inclemency.

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* You are thinking of perfection, my dear lady ; and I marvel not at it, for what else hath ever occupied your thoughts ! But godliness, in almost the best of us, often is austere, often uncompliant and rigid—proner to reprove than to pardon, to drag back or thrust aside than to invite and help onward.

Poor man ! I never knew him before ; I cannot tell how he shall endure his self-reproach, or whether it will bring him to calmer thoughts hereafter.

*Lady Lisle.* I am not a busy idler in curiosity ; nor, if I were, is there time enough left me for indulging in it ; yet gladly would I learn the history of events, at the first appearance so resembling those in mine.

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* The person's name I never may disclose ; which would be the worst thing I could betray of the trust he placed in me. He took refuge in my humble dwelling, imploring me in the name of Christ to harbour him for a season. Food and raiment were afforded him unsparingly ; yet his fears made him shiver through them. Whatever I could urge of prayer and exhortation was not wanting ; still, although he prayed, he was disquieted. Soon came to my ears the declaration of the King, that his Majesty would rather pardon a rebel than the concealer of



a rebel. The hope was a faint one ; but it *was* a hope, and I gave it him. His thanksgivings were now more ardent, his prayers more humble, and oftener repeated. They did not strengthen his heart : it was unpurified and unprepared for them. Poor creature ! he consented with it to betray me ; and I am condemned to be burned alive. Can we believe, can we encourage the hope, that in his weary way through life he will find those only who will conceal from him the knowledge of this execution ? Heavily, too heavily, must it weigh on so irresolute and infirm a breast.

Let it not move you to weeping.

*Lady Lisle.* It does not ; oh ! it does not.

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* What, then ?

*Lady Lisle.* Your saintly tenderness, your heavenly tranquillity.

*Elizabeth Gaunt.* No, no : abstain ! abstain ! It was I who grieved ; it was I who doubted. Let us now be firmer : we have both the same rock to rest upon. See ! I shed no tears.

I saved his life, an unprofitable and (I fear) a joyless one ; he, by God's grace, has thrown open to me, and at an earlier hour than ever I ventured to expect it, the avenue to eternal bliss.

*Lady Lisle.* O my angel ! that strewest with fresh flowers a path already smooth and pleasant to me, may those timorous men who have betrayed, and those misguided ones who have prosecuted us, be conscious on their death-beds that we have entered it ! and they too will at last find rest.



THE EMPRESS CATHARINE AND  
PRINCESS DASHKOF.

*Catharine.* Into his heart! into his heart! If he escapes, we perish.

Do you think, Dashkof, they can hear me through the double door? Yes; hark! they heard me: they have done it.

What bubbling and gurgling! he groaned but once.

Listen! his blood is busier now than it ever was before. I should not have thought it could have splashed so loud upon the floor, although our bed, indeed, is rather of the highest.

Put your ear against the lock.

*Dashkof.* I hear nothing.

*Catharine.* My ears are quicker than yours, and know these notes better. Let me come.—Hear nothing! You did not wait long enough, nor with coolness and patience. There!—there again! The drops are now like lead: every half-minute they penetrate the eider-down and the mattress.—How now! which of these fools has brought his dog with him? What trampling and lapping! the creature will carry the marks all about the palace with his feet and muzzle.

*Dashkof.* Oh, heavens!

*Catharine.* Are you afraid?

*Dashkof.* There is a horror that surpasses fear, and will have none of it. I knew not this before.

*Catharine.* You turn pale and tremble. You should have supported me, in-case I had required it.

*Dashkof.* I thought only of the tyrant. Neither in life nor in death could any one of these miscreants make me

tremble. But the husband slain by his wife!—I saw not into my heart; I looked not into it, and it chastises me.

*Catharine.* Dashkof, are you, then, really unwell?

*Dashkof.* What will Russia, what will Europe, say?

*Catharine.* Russia has no more voice than a whale. She may toss about in her turbulence; but my artillery (for now, indeed, I can safely call it mine) shall stun and quiet her.

*Dashkof.* God grant——

*Catharine.* I cannot but laugh at thee, my pretty Dashkof! God grant, forsooth! He has granted all we wanted from him at present—the safe removal of this odious Peter.

*Dashkof.* Yet Peter loved *you*; and even the worst husband must leave, surely, the recollection of some sweet moments. The sternest must have trembled, both with apprehension and with hope, at the first alteration in the health of his consort; at the first promise of true union, imperfect without progeny. Then, there are thanks rendered together to heaven, and satisfactions communicated, and infant words interpreted; and when the one has failed to pacify the sharp cries of babyhood, pettish and impatient as sovereignty itself, the success of the other in calming it, and the unenvied triumph of this exquisite ambition, and the calm gazes that it wins upon it.

*Catharine.* Are these, my sweet friend, your lessons from the Stoic school? Are not they, rather, the pale-faced reflections of some kind epithalamiaist from Livonia or Bessarabia? Come, come away. I am to know nothing at present of the deplorable occurrence. Did not you wish his death?

*Dashkof.* It is not his death that shocks me.

*Catharine.* I understand you : beside, you said as much before.

*Dashkof.* I fear for your renown.

*Catharine.* And for your own good name—ay, Dashkof ?

*Dashkof.* He was not, nor did I ever wish him to be, my friend.

*Catharine.* You hated him.

*Dashkof.* Even hatred may be plucked up too roughly.

*Catharine.* Europe shall be informed of my reasons, if she should ever find out that I countenanced the conspiracy. She shall be persuaded that her repose made the step necessary ; that my own life was in danger ; that I fell upon my knees to soften the conspirators ; that, only when I had fainted, the horrible deed was done. She knows already that Peter was always ordering new exercises and uniforms ; and my ministers can evince at the first audience my womanly love of peace

*Dashkof.* Europe may be more easily subjugated than duped.

*Catharine.* She shall be both, God willing.

*Dashkof.* The majesty of thrones will seem endangered by this open violence.

*Catharine.* The majesty of thrones is never in jeopardy by those who sit upon them. A sovereign may cover one with blood more safely than a subject can pluck a feather out of the cushion. It is only when the people does the violence that we hear an ill report of it. Kings poison and stab one another in pure legitimacy. Do your republican ideas revolt from such a doctrine ?

*Dashkof.* I do not question this right of theirs, and never will oppose their exercise of it. But if you prove to the people how easy a matter it is to extinguish an emperor, and how pleasantly and prosperously we may live after it,

is it not probable that they also will now and then try the experiment ; particularly, if anyone in Russia should hereafter hear of glory and honour, and how immortal are these by the consent of mankind, in all countries and ages, in him who releases the world, or any part of it, from a lawless and ungovernable despot ? The chances of escape are many, and the greater if he should have no accomplices. Of his renown there is no doubt at all : that is placed above chance and beyond time, by the sword he hath exercised so righteously.

*Catharine.* True ; but we must reason like democrats no longer. Republicanism is the best thing we can have, when we cannot have power ; but no one ever held the two together. I am now autocrat.

*Dashkof.* Truly, then, may I congratulate you. The dignity is the highest a mortal can attain.

*Catharine.* I know and feel it.

*Dashkof.* I wish you always may.

*Catharine.* I doubt not the stability of power : I can make constant both fortune and love. My Dashkof smiles at this conceit : she has here the same advantage, and does not envy her friend even the autocracy.

*Dashkof.* Indeed I do, and most heartily.

*Catharine.* How ?

*Dashkof.* I know very well what those intended who first composed the word ; but they blundered egregiously. In spite of them, it signifies power over oneself—of all power the most enviable, and the least consistent with power over others.

I hope and trust there is no danger to you from any member of the council-board inflaming the guards or other soldiery.

*Catharine.* The members of the council-board did not



sit *at* it, but *upon* it; and their tactics were performed cross-legged. What partisans are to be dreaded of that commander-in-chief whose chief command is over pantaloons and facings, whose utmost glory is perched on loops and feathers, and who fancies that battles are to be won rather by pointing the hat than the cannon?

*Dashkof.* Peter was not insensible to glory; few men are: but wiser heads than his have been perplexed in the road to it, and many have lost it by their ardour to attain it. I have always said that, unless we devote ourselves to the public good, we may perhaps be celebrated; but it is beyond the power of fortune, or even of genius, to exalt us above the dust.

*Catharine.* Dashkof, you are a sensible, sweet creature; but rather too romantic on *principle*, and rather too visionary on glory. I shall always both esteem and love you; but no other woman in Europe will be great enough to endure you, and you will really put the men *hors de combat*. Thinking is an enemy to beauty, and no friend to tenderness. Men can ill brook it one in another; in women it renders them what they would fain call "scornful" (vain assumption of high prerogative!) and what you would find bestial and outrageous. As for my reputation, which I know is dear to you, I can purchase all the best writers in Europe with a snuff-box each, and all the remainder with its contents. Not a gentleman of the Academy but is enchanted by a toothpick, if I deign to send it him. A brilliant makes me Semiramis; a watch-chain, Venus; a ring, Juno. Voltaire is my friend.

*Dashkof.* He was Frederick's.

*Catharine.* I shall be the *Pucelle* of Russia. No! I had forgotten; he has treated her scandalously.

*Dashkof.* Does your Majesty value the flatteries of a



writer who ridicules the most virtuous and glorious of his nation ; who crouched before that monster of infamy, Louis XV. ; and that worse monster, the king his predecessor ? He reviled, with every indignity and indecency, the woman who rescued France ; and who alone, of all that ever led the armies of that kingdom, made its conquerors—the English—tremble. Its monarchs and marshals cried and ran like capons, flapping their fine crests from wall to wall, and cackling at one breath defiance and surrender. The village girl drew them back into battle, and placed the heavens themselves against the enemies of Charles. She seemed supernatural : the English recruits deserted ; they would not fight against God.

*Catharine.* Fools and bigots !

*Dashkof.* The whole world contained none other, excepting those who fed upon them. The Maid of Orleans was pious and sincere : her life asserted it ; her death confirmed it. Glory to her, Catharine, if you love glory. Detestation to him who has profaned the memory of this most holy martyr—the guide and avenger of her king, the redeemer and saviour of her country.

*Catharine.* Be it so ; but Voltaire buoys me up above some impertinent, troublesome qualms.

*Dashkof.* If Deism had been prevalent in Europe, he would have been the champion of Christianity ; and if the French had been Protestants, he would have shed tears upon the papal slipper. He buoys up on one : for he gives no one hope. He may amuse : dulness itself must be amused, indeed, by the versatility and brilliancy of his wit.

*Catharine.* While I was meditating on the great action I have now so happily accomplished, I sometimes thought his wit feeble. This idea, no doubt, originated from the littleness of everything in comparison with my undertaking.

*Dashkof.* Alas ! we lose much when we lose the capacity of being delighted by men of genius, and gain little when we are forced to run to them for incredulity.

*Catharine.* I shall make some use of my philosopher at Ferney. I detest him as much as you do ; but where will you find me another who writes so pointedly ? You really, then, fancy that people care for truth ? Innocent Dashkof ! Believe me, there is nothing so delightful in life as to find a liar in a person of repute. Have you never heard good folks rejoicing at it ? Or, rather, can you mention to me any one who has not been in raptures when he could communicate such glad tidings ? The goutiest man would go on foot without a crutch to tell his friend of it at midnight ; and would cross the Neva for the purpose, when he doubted whether the ice would bear him. Men, in general, are so weak in truth, that they are obliged to put their bravery under it to prop it. Why do they pride themselves, think you, on their courage, when the bravest of them is by many degrees less courageous than a mastiff-bitch in the straw ? It is only that they may be rogues without hearing it, and make their fortunes without rendering an account of them.

Now we chat again as we used to do. Your spirits and your enthusiasm have returned. Courage, my sweet Dashkof ; do not begin to sigh again. We never can want husbands while we are young and lively. Alas ! I cannot always be so. Heigho ! But serfs and preferment will do : none shall refuse me at ninety,—Paphos or Tobolsk.

Have not you a song for me ?

*Dashkof.* German or Russian ?

*Catharine.* Neither, neither. Some frightful word might drop—might remind me—no, nothing shall remind me. French, rather : French songs are the liveliest in the world.

Is the rouge off my face?

*Dashkof.* It is rather in streaks and mottles; excepting just under the eyes, where it sits as it should do.

*Catharine.* I am heated and thirsty: I cannot imagine how. I think we have not yet taken our coffee. Was it so strong? What am I dreaming of? I could eat only a slice of melon at breakfast; my duty urged me *then*, and dinner is yet to come. Remember, I am to faint at the midst of it when the intelligence comes in, or rather when, in despite of every effort to conceal it from me, the awful truth has flashed upon my mind. Remember, too, you are to catch me, and to cry for help, and to tear those fine flaxen hairs which we laid up together on the toilet; and we are both to be as inconsolable as we can be for the life of us. Not now, child, not now. Come, sing. I know not how to fill up the interval. Two long hours yet!—how stupid and tiresome! I wish all things of the sort could be done and be over in a day. They are mightily disagreeable when by nature one is not cruel. People little know my character. I have the tenderest heart upon earth. I am courageous, but I am full of weaknesses. I possess in perfection the higher part of men, and—to a friend I may say it—the most amiable part of women. Ho, ho! at last you smile: now, your thoughts upon that.

*Dashkof.* I have heard fifty men swear it.

*Catharine.* They lied, the knaves! I hardly knew them by sight. We were talking of the sad necessity.—Ivan must follow next: he is heir to the throne. I have a wild, impetuous, pleasant little *protégé*, who shall attempt to rescue him. I will have him persuaded and incited to it, and assured of pardon on the scaffold. He can never know the trick we play him; unless his head, like a bottle of Bordeaux, ripens its contents in the sawdust. Orders are

given that Ivan be despatched at the first disturbance in the precincts of the castle ; in short, at the fire of the sentry. But not now,—another time : two such scenes together, and without some interlude, would perplex people.

I thought we spoke of singing : do not make me wait, my dearest creature ! Now cannot you sing as usual, without smoothing your dove's-throat with your handkerchief, and taking off your necklace ? Give it me, then ; give it me. I will hold it for you : I must play with something.

Sing, sing ; I am quite impatient.

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## LEOFRIC AND GODIVA.

[Leofric rides into Coventry with his young bride. None of the *Conversations* excel this in loveliness.]

*Godiva.* There is a dearth in the land, my sweet Leofric ! Remember how many weeks of drought we have had, even in the deep pastures of Leicestershire ; and how many Sundays we have heard the same prayers for rain, and supplications that it would please the Lord in his mercy to turn aside his anger from the poor, pining cattle. You, my dear husband, have imprisoned more than one malefactor for leaving his dead ox in the public way ; and other hinds have fled before you out of the traces, in which they, and their sons and their daughters, and haply their old fathers and mothers, were dragging the abandoned wain homeward. Although we were accompanied by many brave spearmen and skilful archers, it was perilous to pass the creatures which the farm-yard dogs, driven from the hearth by the poverty of their masters, were tearing and devouring ;

while others, bitten and lamed, filled the air either with long and deep howls or sharp and quick barkings, as they struggled with hunger and feebleness, or were exasperated by heat and pain. Nor could the thyme from the heath, nor the bruised branches of the fir-tree, extinguish or abate the foul odour.

*Leofric.* And now, Godiva, my darling, thou art afraid we should be eaten up before we enter the gates of Coventry ; or perchance that in the gardens there are no roses to greet thee, no sweet herbs for thy mat and pillow.

*Godiva.* Leofric, I have no such fears. This is the month of roses : I find them everywhere since my blessed marriage. They, and all other sweet herbs, I know not why, seem to greet me wherever I look at them, as though they knew and expected me. Surely they cannot feel that I am fond of them.

*Leofric.* O light, laughing simpleton ! But what wouldst thou ? I came not hither to pray ; and yet if praying would satisfy thee, or remove the drought, I would ride up straightway to Saint Michael's and pray until morning.

*Godiva.* I would do the same, O Leofric ! but God hath turned away his ear from holier lips than mine. Would my own dear husband hear me, if I implored him for what is easier to accomplish,—what he can do like God ?

*Leofric.* How ! what is it ?

*Godiva.* I would not, in the first hurry of your wrath, appeal to you, my loving Lord, in behalf of these unhappy men who have offended you.

*Leofric.* Unhappy ! is that all ?

*Godiva.* Unhappy they must surely be, to have offended you so grievously. What a soft air breathes over us ! how quiet and serene and still an evening ! how calm are the heavens and the earth !—Shall none enjoy them ; not even



we, my Leofric? The sun is ready to set : let it never set, O Leofric, on your anger. These are not my words : they are better than mine. Should they lose their virtue from my unworthiness in uttering them?

*Leofric.* Godiva, wouldst thou plead to me for rebels?

*Godiva.* They have, then, drawn the sword against you? Indeed, I knew it not.

*Leofric.* They have omitted to send me my dues, established by my ancestors, well knowing of our nuptials, and of the charges and festivities they require, and that in a season of such scarcity my own lands are insufficient.

*Godiva.* If they were starving, as they said they were——

*Leofric.* Must I starve too? Is it not enough to lose my vassals?

*Godiva.* Enough! O God! too much! too much! May you never lose them! Give them life, peace, comfort, contentment. There are those among them who kissed me in my infancy, and who blessed me at the baptismal font. Leofric, Leofric! the first old man I meet I shall think is one of those; and I shall think on the blessing he gave, and (ah me!) on the blessing I bring back to him. My heart will bleed, will burst; and he will weep at it! he will weep, poor soul, for the wife of a cruel lord who denounces vengeance on him, who carries death into his family!

*Leofric.* We must hold solemn festivals.

*Godiva.* We must, indeed.

*Leofric.* Well, then?

*Godiva.* Is the clamorousness that succeeds the death of God's dumb creatures, are crowded halls, are slaughtered cattle, festivals?—are maddening songs, and giddy dances, and hireling praises from parti-coloured coats? Can the voice of a minstrel tell us better things of ourselves than our own internal one might tell us; or can his breath



make our breath softer in sleep? O my beloved! let everything be a joyance to us: it will, if we will. Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the black-bird in the garden, and do not throb with joy. But, Leofric, the high festival is strown by the servant of God upon the heart of man. It is gladness, it is thanksgiving; it is the orphan, the starveling, pressed to the bosom, and bidden as its first commandment to remember its benefactor. We will hold this festival; the guests are ready: we may keep it up for weeks, and months, and years together, and always be the happier and the richer for it. The beverage of this feast, O Leofric, is sweeter than bee or flower or vine can give us: it flows from heaven; and in heaven will it abundantly be poured out again to him who pours it out here abundantly.

*Leofric.* Thou art wild.

*Godiva.* I have, indeed, lost myself. Some Power, some good kind Power, melts me (body and soul and voice) into tenderness and love. O my husband, we must obey it. Look upon me! look upon me! lift your sweet eyes from the ground! I will not cease to supplicate; I dare not.

*Leofric.* We may think upon it.

*Godiva.* O never say that! What! think upon goodness when you can be good? Let not the infants cry for sustenance! The mother of our blessed Lord will hear them; us never, never afterward.

*Leofric.* Here comes the Bishop: we are but one mile from the walls. Why dismountest thou? no bishop can expect it. Godiva! my honour and rank among men are humbled by this. Earl Godwin will hear of it. Up! up! the Bishop hath seen it: he urgeth his horse onward. Dost thou not hear him now upon the solid turf behind thee?

*Godiva.* Never, no, never will I rise, O Leofric, until you remit this most impious task—this tax on hard labour, on hard life.

*Leofric.* Turn round : look how the fat nag canters, as to the tune of a sinner's psalm, slow and hard-breathing. What reason or right can the people have to complain, while their bishop's steed is so sleek and well caparisoned ? Inclination to change, desire to abolish old usages.—Up ! up ! for shame ! They shall smart for it, idlers ! Sir Bishop, I must blush for my young bride.

*Godiva.* My husband, my husband ! will you pardon the city ?

*Leofric.* Sir Bishop ! I could not think you would have seen her in this plight. Will I pardon ? Yea, Godiva, by the holy rood, will I pardon the city, when thou ridest naked at noontide through the streets !

*Godiva.* O my dear, cruel Leofric, where is the heart you gave me ? It was not so : can mine have hardened it ?

*Bishop.* Earl, thou abasest thy spouse ; she turneth pale, and weepeth. Lady Godiva, peace be with thee.

*Godiva.* Thanks, holy man ! peace will be with me when peace is with your city. Did you hear my Lord's cruel word ?

*Bishop.* I did, lady.

*Godiva.* Will you remember it, and pray against it.

*Bishop.* Wilt *thou* forget it, daughter ?

*Godiva.* I am not offended.

*Bishop.* Angel of peace and purity !

*Godiva.* But treasure it up in your heart : deem it an incense, good only when it is consumed and spent, ascending with prayer and sacrifice. And, now, what was it ?

*Bishop.* Christ save us ! that he will pardon the city when thou ridest naked through the streets at noon.

*Godiva.* Did he swear an oath?

*Bishop.* He sware by the holy rood.

*Godiva.* My Redeemer, thou hast heard it! save the city!

*Leofric.* We are now upon the beginning of the pavement: these are the suburbs. Let us think of feasting: we may pray afterward; to-morrow we shall rest.

*Godiva.* No judgments, then, to-morrow, Leofric?

*Leofric.* None: we will carouse.

*Godiva.* The saints of heaven have given me strength and confidence; my prayers are heard; the heart of my beloved is now softened.

*Leofric.* Ay, ay.

*Godiva.* Say, dearest Leofric, is there indeed no other hope, no other mediation?

*Leofric.* I have sworn. Beside, thou hast made me redden and turn my face away from thee, and all the knaves have seen it: this adds to the city's crime.

*Godiva.* I have blushed too, Leofric, and was not rash nor obdurate.

*Leofric.* But thou, my sweetest, art given to blushing: there is no conquering it in thee. I wish thou hadst not alighted so hastily and roughly: it hath shaken down a sheaf of thy hair. Take heed thou sit not upon it, lest it anguish thee. Well done! it mingleth now sweetly with the cloth of gold upon the saddle, running here and there, as if it had life and faculties and business, and were working thereupon some newer and cunninger device. O my beauteous Eve! there is a Paradise about thee! the world is refreshed as thou movest and breathest on it. I cannot see or think of evil where thou art. I could throw my arms even here about thee. No signs for me! no shaking of sunbeams! no reproof or frown of wonderment.—I *will* say it—now, then, for worse—I could close with my kisses

thy half-open lips, ay, and those lovely and loving eyes, before the people.

*Godiva.* To-morrow you shall kiss me, and they shall bless you for it. I shall be very pale, for to-night I must fast and pray.

*Leofric.* I do not hear thee; the voices of the folk are so loud under this archway.

*Godiva (to herself).* God help them! good kind souls! I hope they will not crowd about me so to-morrow. O Leofric! could my name be forgotten, and yours alone remembered! But perhaps my innocence may save me from reproach; and how many as innocent are in fear and famine! No eye will open on me but fresh from tears. What a young mother for so large a family! Shall my youth harm me? Under God's hand it gives me courage. Ah! when will the morning come? Ah! when will the noon be over?

The story of Godiva, at one of whose festivals or fairs I was present in my boyhood, has always much interested me; and I wrote a poem on it, sitting, I remember, by the *square pool* at Rugby. When I showed it to the friend in whom I had most confidence, he began to scoff at the subject; and, on his reaching the last line, his laughter was loud and immoderate. This conversation has brought both laughter and stanza back to me, and the earnestness with which I entreated and implored my friend *not to tell the lads*, so heart-strickenly and desperately was I ashamed. The verses are these, if any one else should wish another laugh at me:—

In every hour, in every mood,  
O lady, it is sweet and good  
To bathe the soul in prayer;  
And, at the close of such a day,  
When we have ceased to bless and pray,  
To dream on thy long hair.

May the peppermint be still growing on the bank in that place!

## ESSEX AND SPENSER.

[Spenser has just escaped from Ireland, where his house and infant child had been burnt. Essex, not yet aware of his misfortune, has sent for him.]

*Essex.* Instantly on hearing of thy arrival from Ireland, I sent a message to thee, good Edmund, that I might learn, from one so judicious and dispassionate as thou art, the real state of things in that distracted country; it having pleased the Queen's Majesty to think of appointing me her deputy, in order to bring the rebellious to submission.

*Spenser.* Wisely and well considered; but more worthily of her judgment than her affection. May your lordship overcome, as you have ever done, the difficulties and dangers you foresee.

*Essex.* We grow weak by striking at random; and knowing that I must strike, and strike heavily, I would fain see exactly where the stroke shall fall.

Now what tale have you for us?

*Spenser.* Interrogate me, my lord, that I may answer each question distinctly, my mind being in sad confusion at what I have seen and undergone.

*Essex.* Give me thy account and opinion of these very affairs as thou leftest them; for I would rather know one part well than all imperfectly; and the violences of which I have heard within the day surpass belief.

Why weepest thou, my gentle Spenser? Have the rebels sacked thy house?

*Spenser.* They have plundered and utterly destroyed it.

*Essex.* I grieve for thee, and will see thee righted.



*Spenser.* In this they have little harmed me.

*Essex.* How ! I have heard it reported that thy grounds are fertile, and thy mansion large and pleasant.

*Spenser.* If river and lake and meadow-ground and mountain could render any place the abode of pleasantness, pleasant was mine, indeed !

On the lovely banks of Mulla I found deep contentment. Under the dark alders did I muse and meditate. Innocent hopes were my gravest cares, and my playfullest fancy was with kindly wishes. Ah ! surely of all cruelties the worst is to extinguish our kindness. Mine is gone : I love the people and the land no longer. My lord, ask me not about them : I may speak injuriously.

*Essex.* Think rather, then, of thy happier hours and busier occupations ; these likewise may instruct me.

*Spenser.* The first seeds I sowed in the garden, ere the old castle was made habitable for my lovely bride, were acorns from Penshurst. I planted a little oak before my mansion at the birth of each child. My sons, I said to myself, shall often play in the shade of them when I am gone ; and every year shall they take the measure of their growth, as fondly as I take theirs.

*Essex.* Well, well ; but let not this thought make thee weep so bitterly.

*Spenser.* Poison may ooze from beautiful plants ; deadly grief from dearest reminiscences. I *must* grieve, I *must* weep : it seems the law of God, and the only one that men are not disposed to contravene. In the performance of this alone do they effectually aid one another.

*Essex.* Spenser ! I wish I had at hand any arguments or persuasions of force sufficient to remove thy sorrow ; but, really, I am not in the habit of seeing men grieve at anything except the loss of favour at court, or of a



hawk, or of a buck-hound. And were I to swear out condolences to a man of thy discernment, in the same round, roll-call phrases we employ with one another upon these occasions, I should be guilty, not of insincerity, but of insolence. True grief hath ever something sacred in it; and, when it visiteth a wise man and a brave one, is most holy.

Nay, kiss not my hand : he whom God smiteth hath God with him. In his presence what am I ?

*Spenser.* Never so great, my lord, as at this hour, when you see aright who is greater. May He guide your counsels, and preserve your life and glory !

*Essex.* Where are thy friends ? Are they with thee ?

*Spenser.* Ah, where, indeed ! Generous, true-hearted Philip ! where art thou, whose presence was unto me peace and safety ; whose smile was contentment, and whose praise renown ? My lord ! I cannot but think of him among still heavier losses : he was my earliest friend, and would have taught me wisdom.

*Essex.* Pastoral poetry, my dear Spenser, doth not require tears and lamentations. Dry thine eyes ; rebuild thine house : the Queen and Council, I venture to promise thee, will make ample amends for every evil thou hast sustained. What ! does that enforce thee to wail still louder ?

*Spenser.* Pardon me, bear with me, most noble heart ! I have lost what no Council, no Queen, no Essex, can restore.

*Essex.* We will see that. There are other swords, and other arms to yield them, beside a Leicester's and a Raleigh's. Others can crush their enemies, and serve their friends.

*Spenser.* O my sweet child ! And of many so powerful,

many so wise and so beneficent, was there none to save thee? None! none!

*Essex.* I now perceive that thou lamentest what almost every father is destined to lament. Happiness must be bought, although the payment may be delayed. Consider: the same calamity might have befallen thee here in London. Neither the houses of ambassadors, nor the palaces of kings, nor the altars of God himself, are asylums against death. How do I know but under this very roof there may sleep some latent calamity, that in an instant shall cover with gloom every inmate of the house, and every far dependent?

*Spenser.* God avert it!

*Essex.* Every day, every hour of the year, do hundreds mourn what thou mournest.

*Spenser.* Oh, no, no, no! Calamities there are around us; calamities there are all over the earth; calamities there are in all seasons: but none in any season, none in any place, like mine.

*Essex.* So say all fathers, so say all husbands. Look at any old mansion-house, and let the sun shine as gloriously as it may on the golden vanes, or the arms recently quartered over the gateway or the embayed window, and on the happy pair that haply is toying at it: nevertheless, thou mayest say that of a certainty the same fabric hath seen much sorrow within its chambers, and heard many wailings; and each time this was the heaviest stroke of all. Funerals have passed along through the stout-hearted knights upon the wainscot, and amid the laughing nymphs upon the arras. Old servants have shaken their heads, as if somebody had deceived them, when they found that beauty and nobility could perish.

Edmund! the things that are too true pass by us as if they were not true at all; and when they have singled us

out, then only do they strike us. Thou and I must go too. Perhaps the next year may blow us away with its fallen leaves.

*Spenser.* For you, my lord, many years (I trust) are waiting: I never shall see those fallen leaves. No leaf, no bud, will spring upon the earth before I sink into her breast for ever.

*Essex.* Thou, who art wiser than most men, shouldst bear with patience, equanimity, and courage what is common to all.

*Spenser.* Enough, enough, enough! Have all men seen their infant burnt to ashes before their eyes?

*Essex.* Gracious God! Merciful Father! what is this?

*Spenser.* Burnt alive! burnt to ashes! burnt to ashes! The flames dart their serpent tongues through the nursery-window. I cannot quit thee, my Elizabeth! I cannot lay down our Edmund! Oh, these flames! They persecute, they enthrall me; they curl round my temples; they hiss upon my brain; they taunt me with their fierce, foul voices; they carp at me, they wither me, they consume me, throwing back to me a little of life to roll and suffer in, with their fangs upon me. Ask me, my lord, the things you wish to know from me: I may answer them; I am now composed again. Command me, my gracious lord! I would yet serve you: soon I shall be unable. You have stooped to raise me up; you have borne with me; you have pitied me, even like one not powerful. You have brought comfort, and will leave it with me, for gratitude is comfort.

Oh! my memory stands all a tip-toe on one burning point: when it drops from it, then it perishes. Spare me: ask me nothing; let me weep before you in peace,—the kindest act of greatness.

*Essex.* I should rather have dared to mount into the

midst of the conflagration than I now dare entreat thee not to weep. The tears that overflow thy heart, my Spenser, will staunch and heal it in their sacred stream; but not without hope in God.

*Spenser.* My hope in God is that I may soon see again what he has taken from me. Amid the myriads of angels, there is not one so beautiful; and even he (if there be any) who is appointed my guardian could never love me so. Ah! these are idle thoughts, vain wanderings, distempered dreams. If there ever were guardian angels, he who so wanted one—my helpless boy—would not have left these arms upon my knees.

*Essex.* God help and sustain thee, too gentle Spenser! I never will desert thee. But what am I? Great they have called me! Alas, how powerless then and infantile is greatness in the presence of calamity!

Come, give me thy hand: let us walk up and down the gallery. Bravely done! I will envy no more a Sidney or a Raleigh.

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## WILLIAM WALLACE AND KING EDWARD I.

*Edward.* Whom seest thou here?

*Wallace.* The King of England.

*Edward.* And thou abaseth not thy head before the majesty of the sceptre!

*Wallace.* I did.

*Edward.* I marked it not.

*Wallace.* God beheld it when I did it ; and he knoweth, as doth King Edward, how devoutly in my heart's strength I fought for it.

*Edward.* Robber ! for what sceptre ? Who commissioned thee ?

*Wallace.* My country.

*Edward.* Thou liest : there is no country where there is no king.

*Wallace.* Sir, it were unbecoming to ask in this palace, why there is no king in my country.

*Edward.* To spare thy modesty, then, I will inform thee. Because the kingdom is mine. Thou hast rebelled against me ; thou hast presumed even to carry arms against both of those nobles, Bruce and Cummin, who contended for the Scottish throne, and with somewhat indeed of lawyer's likelihood.

*Wallace.* They placed the Scottish throne under the English.

*Edward.* Audacious churl ! is it not meet ?

*Wallace.* In Scotland we think otherwise.

*Edward.* Rebels do, subverters of order, low ignorant knaves, without any stake in the country. It hath pleased God to bless my arms ; what further manifestation of our just claims demandest thou ? Silence becomes thee.

*Wallace.* Where God is named. What is now to the right bank of a river, is to the left when we have crossed it and look round.

*Edward.* Thou wouldst be witty truly ! Who was witticest, thou or I, when thy companion Menteith delivered thee into my hands ?

*Wallace.* Unworthy companions are not the peculiar curse of private men. I chose not Menteith for his treachery, nor rewarded him for it. Sir, I have contended



with you face to face ; but would not here : your glory eclipses mine, if this be glory.

*Edward.* So, thou wouldst place thyself on a level with princes !

*Wallace.* Willingly, if they attacked my country ; and above them.

*Edward.* Dost thou remember the Carron-side, when your army was beaten and dispersed ?

*Wallace.* By the defection of Cummin and the arrogance of Stuart.

*Edward.* Recollestest thou the colloquy that Bruce condescended to hold with thee across the river ?

*Wallace.* I do, sir. Why would not he, being your soldier, and fighting loyally against his native land, pass the water, and exterminate an army so beaten and dispersed ? The saddle-skirts had been rather the stiffer on the morrow, but he would have hung them up and never felt them. Why not finish the business at once ?

*Edward.* He wished to persuade thee, loose reviler, that thy resistance was useless.

*Wallace.* He might have made himself heard better if he had come across.

*Edward.* No trifling ; no arguing with me ; no remarks here, caitiff ! Thou canst not any longer be ignorant that he hath slain his competitor, Cummin ; that my troops surround him ; and that he perhaps may now repent the levity of his reproaches against thee. I may myself have said a hasty word or two ; but thou hast nettled me. My anger soon passes. I never punish in an enemy anything else than obstinacy. I did not counsel the accusations and malignant taunts of Bruce.

*Wallace.* Sir, I do not bear them in mind.

*Edward.* No ?



*Wallace.* Indeed, I neither do nor would.

*Edward.* Dull wretch ! I should never forget such. I can make allowances; I am a king. I would flay him alive for half of them, and make him swallow back the other half without his skin.

*Wallace.* Few have a right to punish ; all to pardon.

*Edward.* I perceive thou hast at last some glimmering of shame ; and adversity makes thee very Christian-like.

*Wallace.* Adversity, then, in exercising her power, loses her name and features. King Edward ! thou hast raised me among men. Without thy banners and bows in array against me, I had sunk into utter forgetfulness. Thanks to thee for placing me, eternally, where no strength of mine could otherwise have borne me ! Thanks to thee for bathing my spirit in deep thoughts, in refreshing calm, in sacred stillness ! This, O King ! is the bath for knighthood : after this it may feast, and hear bold and sweet voices, and mount to its repose.

I thought it hard to be seized and bound and betrayed by those in whom I trusted. I grieved that a valiant soldier (such is Menteith) should act so. Unhappily ! he must now avoid all men's discourses. 'Twill pierce his heart to hear censures of the disloyal ; and praises on the loyal will dry up its innermost drop. Two friends can never more embrace in his presence but he shall curse them in the bitterness of his soul, and his sword shall spring up to cleave them. "Alas !" will he say to himself, "is it thus ? was it thus when I drew it for my country ?"

*Edward.* Think now of other matters : think, what I suggested, of thy reproaches.

*Wallace.* I have none to make myself.

*Edward.* Be it so : I did not talk about that any longer.

*Wallace.* What others, then, can touch or reach me ?

*Edward.* Such as Bruce's.

*Wallace.* Reproaches they were not ; for none were ever cast against me : but taunts they were, not unmingled with invitations.

*Edward.* The same invitations, and much greater, I now repeat. Thou shalt govern Scotland for me.

*Wallace.* Scotland, sir, shall be governed for none : she is old enough to stand by herself, and to stand upright ; the blows she hath received have not broken her loins.

*Edward.* Come, come, Wallace ! thou hast sense and spirit : confess to me fairly that, if thou wert at liberty, thou wouldst gladly make Bruce regret his ill-treatment of thee.

*Wallace.* Well, then, I do confess it.

*Edward.* Something would I myself hazard,—not too much ; but prudently and handsomely Tell me now plainly—for I love plain-speaking and everything free and open—in what manner thou wouldst set about it ; and perhaps, God willing, I may provide the means.

*Wallace.* Sir, you certainly would not : it little suits your temper and disposition.

*Edward.* Faith ! not so little as thou supposest. Magnanimity and long-suffering have grown upon me, and well become me ; but they have not produced all the good I might have expected from them. Joyfully as I would try them again, at any proper opportunity, there is nothing I am not bound to do, in dearness to my people, to rid myself of an enemy.

In my mind no expressions could be more insulting than Bruce's, when he accused thee, a low and vulgar man (how canst thou help that ?), of wishing to possess the crown.

*Wallace.* He was right.

*Edward.* How ! astonishment ! Thou wouldst, then, have usurped the sovereignty !

*Wallace.* I possessed a greater power by war than peace could ever give me ; yet I invited and exhorted the legitimate heir of the throne to fight for it and receive it. If there is any satisfaction or gratification in being the envy of men, I had enough and greatly more than enough of it, when even those I love envied me : what would have been my portion of it, had I possessed that which never should have been mine ?

*Edward.* Why, then, sayst thou that Bruce was right ?

*Wallace.* He judged, as most men do, from his own feelings. Many have worn crowns ; some have deserved them : I have done neither.

*Edward.* Return to Scotland ; bring me Bruce's head back ; and rule the kingdom as viceroy.

*Wallace.* I would rather make him rue his words against me, and hear him.

*Edward.* Thou shalt.

*Wallace.* Believe me, sir, you would repent of your permission.

*Edward.* No, by the saints !

*Wallace.* You would indeed, sir.

*Edward.* Go, and try me ; do not hesitate : I see thou art half inclined ; I may never make the same offer again.

*Wallace.* I will not go.

*Edward.* Weak, wavering man ! hath imprisonment in one day or two wrought such a change in thee ?

*Wallace.* Slavery soon does it ; but I am, and will ever be, unchanged.

*Edward.* It was not well, nor by my order, that thou wert dragged along the road, barefooted and bareheaded, while it snowed throughout all the journey.

*Wallace.* Certainly, sir, you did not order it to snow

from the latter days of December till the middle of January ; but whatever else was done, if my guard spake the truth——

*Edward.* He lied, he lied, he lied——

*Wallace.*——or the warrant he showed me is authentic, was done according to your royal order.

*Edward.* What ! are my officers turned into constables ? base varlets ! It must have seemed hard, Wallace !

*Wallace.* Not that, indeed ; for I went barefooted in my youth, and have mostly been bareheaded when I have not been in battle. But to be thrust and shoven into the courtyard ; to shiver under the pent-house from which the wind had blown the thatch, while the blazing fire within made the snow upon the opposite roof redden like the dawn ; to wax faint, ahungered, and athirst, when, within arm's length of me, men pushed the full cup away, and would drink no more, —to that I have never been accustomed in my country. The dogs, honester and kinder folks than most, but rather dull in the love of hospitality, unless in the beginning some pains are taken with them by their masters, tore my scant gear ; and then your soldiers felt their contempt more natural and easy. The poor curs had done for them what their betters could not do ; and the bolder of the company looked hard in my face, to see if I were really the same man.

*Edward.* O the rude rogues ! that was too bad.

*Wallace.* The worst was this. Children and women, fathers and sons, came running down the hills—some sinking knee-deep in the encrusted snow, others tripping lightly over it—to celebrate the nativity of our blessed Lord. They entreated, and the good priest likewise, that I might be led forth into the church, and might kneel down amid them. “Off,” cried the guard ; “would ye plead for Wallace the traitor ?” I saw them tremble, for it was

treason in them ; and then came my grief upon me, and bore hard. They lifted up their eyes to heaven, and it gave me strength.

*Edward.* Thou shalt not, I swear to thee, march back in such plight.

*Wallace.* I will not, I swear to thee, march a traitor.

*Edward.* Right ! right ! I can trust thee—more than half already. Bruce is the traitor, the worst of the two : he raises the country against me. Go ; encompass him ; entrap him, quell him.

Sweetheart ! thou hast a rare fancy, a youth's love at first sight, for thy chains : unwilling to barter them for liberty, for country, for revenge, for honour.

*Wallace.* The two latter are very dear to me ! For the two former I have often shed my blood, and, if more is wanting, take it. My heart is no better than a wooden cup, whereof the homely liquor a royal hand would cast away indifferently. There once were those who pledged it ! where are they ? Forgive my repining, O God ! Enough, if they are not here.

*Edward.* Nay, nay, Wallace ! thou wrongest me. Thou art a brave man. I do not like to see those irons about thy wrists : they are too broad and tight ; they have bruised thee cruelly.

*Wallace.* Methinks there was no necessity to have hammered the rivets on quite so hard ; and the fellow who did it needed not to look over his shoulder so often while he was about it, telling the people, "This is Wallace." Wrist or iron, he and his hammer cared not.

*Edward.* I am mightily taken with the fancy of seeing thee mortify Bruce. Thou shalt do it : let me have thy plan.

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ARCHBISHOP BOULTER AND PHILIP  
SAVAGE.

[“Boulter, primate of Ireland, saved that kingdom from pestilence and famine in the year 1729, by supplying the poor with bread, medicines, attendance, and every possible comfort and accommodation. Again, in 1740 and 1741, two hundred and fifty thousand were fed, twice a-day, *principally at his expense*, as we find in *La Biographie Universelle*—an authority the least liable to suspicion. He built hospitals at Drogheda and Armagh, and endowed them richly. No private man, in any age or country, has contributed so largely to relieve the sufferings of his fellow-creatures; to which object he and his wife devoted their ample fortunes, both during their lives and after their decease.”]

*Boulter.* Heartily glad am I to see you, my brother, if, in these times of calamity and desolation, such a sentiment may be expressed or felt. My wife is impatient to embrace her sister.

*Savage.* My lord primate, I did not venture to bring her with me from Dublin, wishing to wait until I had explored the road, and had experienced the temper of the people.

*Boulter.* I much regret her absence, and yet more the cause of it; let me hope, however, that nothing unexpectedly unpleasant has occurred to you in your journey hither.

*Savage.* I came on horseback, attended by one servant. Had I been prudent, he would not have worn his livery; for hardly any object is more offensive to the poor, in seasons of distress, than a servant in livery, spruce and at his ease. They attach to it the idea of idleness and comfort, which they contrast with their own hard labour and its ill requital.

Two miles from Armagh we were met by a multitude of



work-people ; they asked my groom who I was ; he told them my name, and, perhaps, in the pride of his heart, my office. Happily they never had heard of the one or the other. They then enclosed me, and insisted on knowing whether I came with orders from the castle to fire upon them, as had been threatened some days before.

“For what? my honest friends!” cried I.

“For wanting bread and asking it,” was the answer that ran from mouth to mouth, frequently repeated, and deepening at every repetition, till hoarseness and weakness made it drop and cease. I then assured them that no such orders were given, or would ever be ; and that the king and government were deeply afflicted at their condition, which, however, was only temporary.

Upon this there came forward one from among them ; and, laying his hand upon the mane of my horse, he laughed till he staggered. I looked at him in amaze. When he had recovered himself a little from his transport, he said, “I hope you are honest, my friend ! for you talk like a fool, which in people of your sort is a token of it, though sometimes one no weightier than Will Wood’s for a halfpenny. But prythee, now, my jewel, how can you in your conscience take upon yourself to say that the king and his ministers care a flea’s rotten tooth whether or not we crack with emptiness and thirst, so long as our arms fill their bellies, and drive away troublesome neighbours while they are napping afterward ? Deeply afflicted ! is it deeply afflicted ! O’ my soul, one would think there was as much pleasure in deep affliction as in deep drinking, or even more : for many have washed away their lands with claret, and have then given over drinking ; but where is the good fellow who has done anything in this quarter by way of raising his head above such a deep affliction ? Has the king or his lord-

lieutenant sent us the value of a mangy sow's bristle? I may be mistaken; but I am apt to think that, shallow as we are bound to believe we are in other things, our affliction is as deep as theirs, or near upon it; and yet we never said a word about the matter. We only said we were naked and starving, and quitted our cabins that we may leave to our fathers and mothers our own beds to die on, and that we may hear no longer the cries of our wives and little ones, which, let me tell you, are very different in those who are famishing from any we ever heard before. Deeply afflicted! Now, afore God! what miseries have they suffered, or have they seen? I have heard of rich people in Dublin with such a relish for deep affliction they will give eighteenpence for a book to read of it."

Partly in hopes of proceeding, and partly in commiseration, I slipped a guinea into the fellow's hand. He took it, and did not thank me; but continuing to hold it, together with my horse's mane, he said, "Come along with me." I thought it prudent to comply. At the distance of about a mile, on the right hand, is the cabin to which I was conducted. A wretched horse was standing half within it and half without, and exhibiting in his belly and ribs the clearest signs of famine and weariness. "Let us hear," said my guide, "what is going on."

I dismounted and stood with him. Looking round about the tenement, I found no article of furniture; for the inhabitant was lying on the floor, covered with his clothes only. Against the wall of the doorway was hanging from a nail a broken tin tobacco-box, kept open by a ring which had formerly been the ornament of a pig's snout. Its more recent service was to make a hole in a piece of paper, on which I read, "Notice to quit."

There was a priest in the cabin, who spoke, as nearly as

I can recollect, these words: "You are the only Catholic in the parish, and ought to set an example to the rest of them about you."

"Father!" said a weak voice, "you told me I might go to the archbishop's when I grew stouter, and get what I could; it being the spoil of an enemy. Such was my hunger on first recovering from the fever, and the worse perhaps from having had nothing to eat for a couple of days, that, when the servants gave me a basin of broth, I swallowed it. None of them had the charity to warn me that it was a piece of beef which was lying at the bottom, or to tell me that (for what they knew) it might be a turnip; so, without thinking at all about it, I just let it take its own way! There was no more of it than the size of a good potato; a healthy man would have made but four bites of it; I had a bitch that would have swallowed it at one, when she had whelps. I have seen a man who would make so little of it, he would let his wife eat it all, at a meal or two; it was next to nothing. In my mind, I have a doubt whether, as there might be some fever left upon me, it was not rather the show of beef rising out of the broth than real beef. For sure enough I might mistake, as I might in thinking I was well again when I had still the fever; which could scarcely come back upon me for eating, when it had come upon me the week before for not eating. Howsoever, I went home and laid myself down and slept, and dreamed of angels with ladles of soup in their hands, some ugly enough, and others laughing, and one of them led that very horse of yours into the cabin: I should know him again anywhere. We looked in each other's face for ten minutes; then down he threw himself on me, as though I were no better than ling and fern. There he would have stayed, I warrant, till sunrise, if it had not been Sunday morning."

"How!" cried the priest. "What then! all this iniquity was committed upon the Saturday!" "This day week," answered the sick man, humbled as much, I suspect, by blundering into the confession, as he was by the reproof.

"And now, by my soul! our Lady calls you to an account, sinner!" said the priest, angrily. "I would not wonder if the arch-heretic you call archbishop gave out so many thousand bowls of soup a-day, for the sake of drowning that soul of yours, swiller and swine! Hither have I been riding a matter of thirteen miles, to see that everything is going on as it ought, and not an ounce of oatmeal or a potato in the house."

The poor inhabitant of the cabin sighed aloud. My conductor strode softly toward the priest, and, twitching him by the sleeve, asked him softly what he thought of the man's health. The poor creature heard the question, and much more distinctly the answer, which was, that he could not live out another day. He requested the holy man to hear his confession. The most grievous part of it had been made already: but now the piece of beef had its real size and weight given to it; he had eaten it with pleasure, with knowledge; he had gone to bed upon it; he had tried to sleep; he had slept; he had said no more *ave-marias* than ordinarily. A soul labouring under such a mountain of sin required (God knows how many) masses for its purgation and acquittance.

"Be aisy!" said my conductor. "He shall sup with our blessed Lord in Paradise by seven o'clock to-morrow night, if masses can mash potatoes, or there is butter-milk above."

On saying this he pulled open the priest's hand, slapped it with some violence, left the guinea in it, and wished me a

pleasant ride. I could not bear to let him quit me so abruptly, glad as I should have been before at his departure. I asked him whether the dying man was his relative. He said, "No." I wished to replace his generosity somewhat more largely.

"Sir," said he, "I have enough for several days yet ; when it is gone, the archbishop will give me what he gives the rest. As for that grassmonger, he shall eat this rasher of bacon with me this blessed night, or I'll be damned." So saying, he drew a thin slice from his pocket, neither enwrapped in paper nor in bread.

*Boulter.* I hope soon to find out this worthy man, the warmth of whose heart may well atone for that of his expressions ; but, lest he should be too urgent in his invitation, I will immediately send one to my brother clergyman, entreating him to dine with us. We have always fish on Fridays and Saturdays from the lake near us, in case we may be favoured by any Roman Catholic visitor.

This slight displeasure is, I hope, the only one you have met with.

*Philip Savage.* I must confess it grieved me to see the sheriff's officers erecting the gallows at the entrance of the city : it must exasperate the populace. Men in the extremity of suffering lose sooner the sense of fear than the excitability to indignation : the people of Ireland have endured enough already.

*Boulter.* Indeed have they. It was thought the excess of hard-heartedness, when men asked for bread, to give a stone ; but better a stone than a halter.

*Philip Savage.* As our country gentlemen, in this part of Ireland particularly, are rather worse than semi-barbarous, and hear nothing from their cradles but threats and defiance, they may deem it requisite and becoming to erect



this formidable signal of regular government against the advances of insurrection.

*Boulter.* More are made insurgents by firing on them than by feeding them ; and men are more dangerous in the field than in the kitchen.

*Philip Savage.* In critical times, such as these, some coercion and some intimidation may be necessary. We must be vigilant and resolute against the ill-intentioned.

*Boulter.* My dear brother ! would it not be wiser to give other intentions to the ill-intentioned ? Cruelty is no more the cure of crimes than it is the cure of sufferings : compassion, in the first instance, is good for both. I have known it bring compunction when nothing else would. I forbear to enlarge on the enormous inhumanity of inflicting the punishment of death for small offences ; yet I must remind you to ask yourself, whether, in your belief, ten years ever elapsed in Ireland, or even in England, without some capital sentence wrongfully pronounced. If this be the case, and most men think it is, does it not occur to you that such a penalty should for ever be expunged from our statute-book ? Severe as another may be, reparation of some kind may be made, on the detection of its injustice. But what reparation can reach the dead from the living ? What reparation can even reach the judge who condemned him ? for he too must be almost as much a sufferer. In vain will the jurymen split and subdivide the responsibility ; in vain will they lament that nothing now can mitigate the verdict. Release, then, the innocent from this long suffering, if you will not release the guilty from a shorter. What can be expected from the humanity of men, habituated to see death inflicted on their fellow-men, for offences which scarcely bring an inconvenience on the prosecutor ? And what can be expected from the judgment of those above



them, who denounce vengeance to preserve peace, and take away life to show respect for property? More ferocity hath issued from under English scarlet than from under American ochre. Violent resentments are the natural propensities of untamed man: the protection of our property does not require them.

*Philip Savage.* The legislator and judge feel none.

*Boulter.* Why then imitate them in voice and action? Is there anything lovely or dignified in such an imitation?

*Philip Savage.* Our judges in these days are not often guilty of the like unseemliness, which was common fifty years ago.

*Boulter.* Certainly they are less boisterous and blustering than under the first James and the first Charles, and have wiped away much of that rudeness and effrontery which is chastened in other professions by civil company and more salutary awe: nevertheless, at the commencement of the disturbances which this famine brought about, many poor wretches were condemned to death, after much intemperate language from the judges, who declined to present petitions on their behalf to the lord-lieutenant, as I told you in my letter. Probably they are little pleased that his flexibility of temper hath yielded to our remonstrances and authority. Painful would be my situation as president of the council, and yours as chancellor of the exchequer, if such people as are usually sent hither for lords-lieutenant were as refractory as they are remiss. I trust it will ever be found convenient to appoint men of clemency to the first station, and that I shall never be forced to exercise on them the powers entrusted to me of coercion and control.

It is well when people can believe that their misfortunes are temporary. How can we apply such a term to pestilence and famine?

*Philip Savage.* Surely the violence of the evil eats away the substance of it speedily. Pestilence and famine are, and always have been, temporary and brief.

*Boulter.* Temporary they are, indeed : brief are they, very brief. But why ? because life is so under them. To the world they are extremely short ; but can we say they are short to him who bears them ? And of such there are thousands, tens of thousands, in this most afflicted, most neglected country. The whole of a life, be it what it may be, is not inconsiderable to him who leaves it ; any more than the whole of a property, be it but an acre, is inconsiderable to him who possesses it. Whether want and wretchedness last for a month or for half-a-century, if they last as long as the sufferer, they are to him of very long duration. Let us try, then, rather to remove the evils of Ireland, than to persuade those who undergo them that there are none. For, if they could be thus persuaded, we should have brutalised them first to such a degree as would render them more dangerous than they were in the reigns of Elizabeth or Charles.

There will never be a want of money, or a want of confidence, in any well-governed State that has been long at peace, and without the danger of its interruption. But a want of the necessaries of life, in peasants or artisans, when the seasons have been favourable, is a certain sign of defect in the constitution, or of criminality in the administration. It may not be advisable or safe to tell every one this truth : yet it is needful to inculcate it on the minds of governors, and to repeat it until they find the remedy ; else the people, one day or other, will send those out to look for it who may trample down more in the search than suits good husbandry.

God be praised ! we have no such exclamation to make as that of Ecclesiastes : “ Woe to thee, O land ! whose king

is a child,"—an evil that may afflict a land under the same king, for years indefinite. Our gracious sovereign, ever mindful of his humble origin, and ever grateful to the people who raised him from it to the most exalted throne in the universe,—a throne hung round with the trophies of Cressy, Agincourt, Poitiers, and Blenheim,—has little inclination to imitate the ruinous pride of Louis the Fourteenth; to expend his revenues, much less those of his people, in the excavation of rivers, the elevation of mountains, and the transplantation of Asia, with all her gauds and vanities, under the gilded domes of fairy palaces.

*Philip Savage.* Versailles is a monument, raised by the king of one country for the benefit of kings in all others; warning each in successive generations not to exhaust the labour and patience of his people, by the indulgence of his profusion and sensuality.

*Boulter.* Let us hope, my brother, that the poverty this structure has entailed on the French may not hereafter serve for the foundation of more extensive evils, and exacerbate a heartless race, ever disposed to wanton cruelties, until they at last strike down the virtuous for standing too near, and for warning them where their blows should fall. In which case they will become even worse slaves than they are, from the beating they must sooner or later undergo.

If I could leave the country in its present state, and if I possessed the same advantage of daily access to the king as when I attended him from Germany, I should take the liberty of representing to him, that his own moderation of expenditure might well be copied in the public, and that some offices and some pensions in this country might be lopped off, without national dishonour or popular discontent.

*Philip Savage.* There has always been an outcry against places and pensions, whether the country was flourishing or otherwise. We may lop until we cut our fingers and disable ourselves for harder work. Surely a man of your grace's discernment would look well to it first, and remember, that, where the sun is let in, the wind too may let in itself.

*Boulter.* A want of caution is not among my defects; nor is an unsteady deference to the clamours of the multitude. It is necessary to ask sometimes even well-dressed men, have not the judges places? is not every office of trust a place? and can any government be conducted without its functionaries? I do not follow the public cry, nor run before it. Pensions, too, occasionally are just and requisite. What man of either party will deny, that a Marlborough and a Peterborough deserved such a token of esteem from the country they served so gloriously? or that the payment of even a large annuity to such illustrious men is not in the end the best economy? These rewards stimulate exertion and create merit. They likewise display to other nations our justice, our generosity, our power, our wealth, and are the best monuments we can erect to Victory. Do not be alarmed lest the people should insist on too rigorous a defalcation. The British people, and still more the Irish, would resent, as a private wrong, the tearing one leaf from the brow of a brave defender. On the contrary, to say nothing of clerks and commissaries, the grant of pensions to ambassadors and envoys, who cannot act from their own judgment, and who only execute the orders of others, without the necessity of genius, of learning, of discernment, or of courage, is superfluous to a nation in its prosperity, and insulting to one in its distress. They are always chosen out of private friendship; and their stipends, while they

act, are only presents made to them by their patrons. To pay them afterward for having taken the trouble to receive these presents, is less needful than to send a Christmas-box to my wig-maker, because I had preferred him already, and had paid him handsomely for making me a wig in midsummer. Should we not think him a foolish man if he expected it, and an impudent one if he asked it?

We are so fortunate as to have few pensions to discharge, and little debt: nevertheless, in times so disastrous as these, when many thousands, I might say millions, are starving, and when persons once in affluence have neither bread nor work, it behooves us, who wish security and respectability to the government, to deduct from waste and riot that which was not given originally for distinguished merit, and which may now save the lives of generations, and scarcely take the garnish off one dish in the second courses of a few.

At my table you will find only ordinary fare; and I hardly know whether I am not sinning while I thank my God that it is plentiful.

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## LORD BACON AND RICHARD HOOKER.

*Bacon.* Hearing much of your worthiness and wisdom, Master Richard Hooker, I have besought your comfort and consolation in this my too heavy affliction: for we often do stand in need of hearing what we know full well, and our own balsams must be poured into our breasts by another's hand. As the air at our doors is sometimes more expeditious in removing pain and heaviness from the body than the



most far-fetched remedies would be, so the voice alone of a neighbourly and friendly visitant may be more effectual in assuaging our sorrows, than whatever is most forcible in rhetoric and most recondite in wisdom. On these occasions we cannot put ourselves in a posture to receive the latter, and still less are we at leisure to look into the corners of our store-room, and to uncurl the leaves of our references. As for Memory, who, you may tell me, would save us the trouble, she is footsore enough in all conscience with me, without going further back. Withdrawn as you live from court and courtly men, and having ears occupied by better reports than such as are flying about me, yet haply so hard a case as mine, befalling a man heretofore not averse from the studies in which you take delight, may have touched you with some concern.

*Hooker.* I do think, my Lord of Verulam, that, unhappy as you appear, God in sooth has foregone to chasten you, and that the day which in his wisdom he appointed for your trial, was the very day on which the King's Majesty gave unto your ward and custody the great seal of his English realm. And yet perhaps it may be—let me utter it without offence—that your features and stature were from that day forward no longer what they were before. Such an effect do power and rank and office produce even on prudent and religious men.

A hound's whelp howleth, if you pluck him up above where he stood: man, in much greater peril from falling, doth rejoice. You, my Lord, as befitted you, are smitten and contrite, and do appear in deep wretchedness and tribulation to your servants and those about you; but I know that there is always a balm which lies uppermost in these afflictions, and that no heart rightly softened can be very sore.



*Bacon.* And yet, Master Richard, it is surely no small matter to lose the respect of those who looked up to us for countenance ; and the favour of a right learned king ; and, O Master Hooker, such a power of money ! But money is mere dross. I should always hold it so, if it possessed not two qualities : that of making men treat us reverently, and that of enabling us to help the needy.

*Hooker.* The respect, I think, of those who respect us for what a fool can give and a rogue can take away, may easily be dispensed with ; but it is indeed a high prerogative to help the needy ; and when it pleases the Almighty to deprive us of it, let us believe that he foreknoweth our inclination to negligence in the charge entrusted to us, and that in his mercy he hath removed from us a most fearful responsibility.

*Bacon.* I know a number of poor gentlemen to whom I could have rendered aid.

*Hooker.* Have you examined and sifted their worthiness ?

*Bacon.* Well and deeply.

*Hooker.* Then must you have known them long before your adversity, and while the means of succouring them were in your hands.

*Bacon.* You have circumvented and entrapped me, Master Hooker. Faith ! I am mortified : you the schoolman, I the schoolboy !

*Hooker.* Say not so, my Lord. Your years, indeed, are fewer than mine, by seven or thereabout ; but your knowledge is far higher, your experience richer. Our wits are not always in blossom upon us. When the roses are overcharged and languid, up springs a spike of rue. Mortified on such an occasion ? God forefend it ! But again to the business.—I should never be over-penitent for my neglect of needy gentlemen who have neglected themselves much

worse. They have chosen their profession with its chances and contingencies. If they had protected their country by their courage or adorned it by their studies, they would have merited, and under a king of such learning and such equity would have received in some sort, their reward. I look upon them as so many old cabinets of ivory and tortoise-shell, scratched, flawed, splintered, rotten, defective both within and without, hard to unlock, insecure to lock up again, unfit to use.

*Bacon.* Methinks it beginneth to rain, Master Richard. What if we comfort our bodies with a small cup of wine, against the ill-temper of the air. Wherefore, in God's name, are you affrightened?

*Hooker.* Not so, my Lord; not so.

*Bacon.* What then affects you?

*Hooker.* Why, indeed, since your Lordship interrogates me—I looked, idly and imprudently, into that rich buffet; and I saw, unless the haze of the weather has come into the parlour, or my sight is the worse for last night's reading, no fewer than six silver pints. Surely, six tables for company are laid only at coronations.

*Bacon.* There are many men so squeamish that forsooth they would keep a cup to themselves, and never communicate it to their nearest and best friend; a fashion which seems to me offensive in an honest house, where no disease of ill repute ought to be feared. We have lately, Master Richard, adopted strange fashions; we have run into the wildest luxuries. The Lord Leicester, I heard it from my father—God forefend it should ever be recorded in our history!—when he entertained Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle, laid before Her Majesty a fork of pure silver. I the more easily credit it, as Master Thomas Coriatt doth vouch for having seen the same monstrous sign of

voluptuousness at Venice. We are surely the especial favourites of Providence, when such wantonness hath not melted us quite away. After this portent, it would otherwise have appeared incredible that we should have broken the Spanish Armada.

Pledge me : hither comes our wine.

[*To the Servant.*

Dolt ! villain ! is not this the beverage I reserve for myself ?

The blockhead must imagine that Malmsey runs in a stream under the ocean, like the Alpheus. Bear with me, good Master Hooker, but verily I have little of this wine, and I keep it as a medicine for my many and growing infirmities. You are healthy at present : God in his infinite mercy long maintain you so ! Weaker drink is more wholesome for you. The lighter ones of France are best accommodated by Nature to our constitutions, and therefore she has placed them so within our reach that we have only to stretch out our necks, in a manner, and drink them from the vat. But this Malmsey, this Malmsey, flies from centre to circumference, and makes youthful blood boil.

*Hooker.* Of a truth, my knowledge in such matters is but spare. My Lord of Canterbury once ordered part of a goblet, containing some strong Spanish wine, to be taken to me from his table when I dined by sufferance with his chaplains, and, although a most discreet, prudent man as befitteth his high station, was not so chary of my health as your Lordship. Wine is little to be trifled with, physic less. The Cretans, the brewers of this Malmsey, have many aromatic and powerful herbs among them. On their mountains, and notably on Ida, grows that dittany which works such marvels, and which perhaps may give activity to this

hot medicinal drink of theirs. I would not touch it, knowingly: an unregarded leaf, dropped into it above the ordinary, might add such puissance to the concoction as almost to break the buckles in my shoes; since we have good and valid authority that the wounded hart, on eating thereof, casts the arrow out of his haunch or entrails, although it stuck a palm deep.

*Bacon.* When I read of such things I doubt them. Religion and politics belong to God, and to God's vicegerent the King; we must not touch upon them unadvisedly: but if I could procure a plant of dittany on easy terms, I would persuade my apothecary and my gamekeeper to make some experiments.

*Hooker.* I dare not distrust what grave writers have declared in matters beyond my knowledge.

*Bacon.* Good Master Hooker, I have read many of your reasonings, and they are admirably well sustained: added to which, your genius has given such a strong current to your language as can come only from a mighty elevation and a most abundant plenteousness. Yet forgive me, in God's name, my worthy Master, if you descried in me some expression of wonder at your simplicity. We are all weak and vulnerable somewhere: common men in the higher parts; heroes, as was feigned of Achilles, in the lower. You would define to a hair's-breadth the qualities, states, and dependencies of Principalities, Dominations, and Powers; you would be unerring about the Apostles and the Churches; and 'tis marvellous how you wander about a pot-herb!

*Hooker.* I know my poor weak intellects, most noble Lord, and how scantily they have profited by my hard painstaking. Comprehending few things, and those imperfectly, I say only what others have said before, wise men

and holy ; and if, by passing through my heart into the wide world around me, it pleaseth God that this little treasure shall have lost nothing of its weight and pureness, my exultation is then the exultation of humility. Wisdom consisteth not in knowing many things, nor even in knowing them thoroughly ; but in choosing and in following what conduces the most certainly to our lasting happiness and true glory. And this wisdom, my Lord of Verulam, cometh from above.

*Bacon.* I have observed among the well-informed and the ill-informed nearly the same quantity of infirmities and follies : those who are rather the wiser keep them separate, and those who are wisest of all keep them better out of sight. Now, examine the sayings and writings of the prime philosophers, and you will often find them, Master Richard, to be untruths made to resemble truths. The business with them is to approximate as nearly as possible, and not to touch it : the goal of the charioteer is *evitata fervidis rotis*, as some poet saith. But we who care nothing for chants and cadences, and have no time to catch at applauses, push forward over stones and sands straightway to our object. I have persuaded men, and shall persuade them for ages, that I possess a wide range of thought unexplored by others, and first thrown open by me, with many fair enclosures of choice and abstruse knowledge. I have incited and instructed them to examine all subjects of useful and rational inquiry ; few that occurred to me have I myself left untouched or untried : one, however, hath almost escaped me, and surely one worth the trouble.

*Hooker.* Pray, my Lord, if I am guilty of no indiscretion, what may it be ?

*Bacon.* Francis Bacon.



## GENERAL LACY AND CURA MERINO.

[Lacy and Merino, who have been fighting together in Spain, discourse concerning England. Landor here eloquently expounds his political views.—The previous *Conversations* have generally been given entire ; some omissions have been made in most of those that follow.]

*Merino.* It was God's will. As for those rebels, the finger of God——

*Lacy.* Prythee, Señor Curedo, let God's finger alone. Very worthy men are apt to snatch at it upon too light occasions : they would stop their tobacco-pipes with it. If Spain, in the opinion of our late opponents, could have obtained a free Constitution by other means, they never would have joined the French. True, they persisted : but how few have wisdom or courage enough to make the distinction between retracting an error and deserting a cause ! He who declares himself a party-man, let his party profess the most liberal sentiments, is a registered and enlisted slave ; he begins by being a zealot and ends by being a dupe ; he is tormented by regret and anger, yet is he as incapable from shame and irresolution of throwing off the livery under which he sweats and fumes, as was that stronger one, more generously mad, the garment empoisoned with the life-blood of the Centaur.

*Merino.* How much better is it to abolish parties by fixing a legitimate king at the head of affairs !

*Lacy.* The object, thank God, is accomplished. Ferdinand is returning to Madrid, if perverse men do not mislead him.

*Merino.* And yet there are Spaniards wild enough to talk of Cortes and Chambers of Peers.



*Lacy.* Of the latter I know nothing ; but I know that Spain formerly was great, free, and happy, by the administration of her Cortes : and, as I prefer in policy old experiments to new, I should not be sorry if the madness, as you call it, spread in that direction.

There are many forms of government, but only two kinds ; the free and the despotic : in the one the people hath its representatives, in the other not. Freedom, to be, must be perfect : the half-free can no more exist, even in idea, than the half-entire. Restraints laid by a people on itself are sacrifices made to liberty ; and it never exerts a more beneficent or a greater power than in imposing them. The nation that pays taxes without its own consent is under slavery : whosoever causes, whosoever maintains that slavery, subverts or abets the subversion of social order. Whoever is above the law is out of the law, just as evidently as whoever is above this room is out of this room. If men will outlaw themselves by overt acts, we are not to condemn those who remove them by the means least hazardous to the public peace. If even my daughter brought forth a monster, I could not arrest the arm that should smother it : and monsters of this kind are by infinite degrees less pernicious than such as rise up in society by violation of law.

In regard to a Chamber of Peers, Spain does not contain the materials. What has been the education of our grandees ? How narrow the space between the horn-book and *sanbenito* ! The English are amazed, and the French are indignant, that we have not imitated their Constitutions. All Constitutions formed for the French are provisional. Whether they trip or tumble, whether they step or slide, the tendency is direct to slavery ; none but a most rigid government will restrain them from cruelty or from

mischief; they are scourged into good humour and starved into content. I have read whatever I could find on the English Constitution; and it appears to me, like the Deity, an object universally venerated, but requiring a Revelation. I do not find the House of Peers, as I expected to find it, standing between the king and people. Throughout a long series of years, it has been only twice in opposition to the Commons: once in declaring that the slave-trade ought not to be abolished; again in declaring that those who believe in transubstantiation are unfit to command an army or to decide a cause.

*Merino.* Into what extravagances does infidelity lead men, in other things not unwise! Blessed virgin of the thousand pains! and great Santiago of Compostella! deign to bring that benighted nation back again to the right path.

*Lacy.* On Deity we reason by attributes; on government by metaphors. Wool or sand, embodied, may deaden the violence of what is discharged against the walls of a city: hereditary aristocracy hath no such virtue against the assaults of despotism, which on the contrary it will maintain in opposition to the people. Since its power and wealth, although they are given *by* the king, must be given *from* the nation,—the one has not an interest in enriching it, the other has. All the countries that ever have been conquered have been surrendered to the conqueror by the aristocracy, stipulating for its own property, power, and rank, yielding up the men, cattle, and metals on the common. Nevertheless, in every nation the project of an upper chamber will be warmly cherished. The richer aspire to honours, the poorer to protection. Every family of wealth and respectability wishes to count a peer among its relatives, and, where the whole number is yet under

nomination, every one may hope it. Those who have no occasion for protectors desire the power of protecting; and those who have occasion for them desire them to be more efficient.

Despotism sits nowhere so secure as under the effigy and ensigns of Freedom. \* You would imagine that the British peers have given their names to beneficent institutions, wise laws, and flourishing colonies: no such thing; instead of which, a slice of meat between two slices of bread derives its name from one; a tumble of heels over head, a feat performed by beggar-boys on the roads, from another. The former, I presume, was a practical commentator on the Roman fable of the belly and the members, and maintained with all his power and interest the supremacy of the nobler part; and the latter was of a family in which the head never was equivalent to the legs. Others divide their titles with a waistcoat, a bonnet, and a boot; the more illustrious with some island inhabited by sea-calves.

*Merino.* I deprecate such importations into our monarchy. God forbid that the ermine of His Catholic Majesty be tagged with the sordid tail of a monster so rough as feudality!

*Lacy.* If kings, whether by reliance on external force, by introduction of external institutions, or by misapplication of what they may possess within the realm, show a disposition to conspire with other kings against its rights, it may be expected that communities will (some secretly and others openly) unite their moral, their intellectual, and, when opportunity permits it, their physical powers against them. If alliances are holy which are entered into upon the soil usurped, surely not unholy are those which are formed for defence against all kinds and all methods of spoliation. If men are marked out for banishment, for imprisonment,

for slaughter, because they assert the rights and defend the liberties of their country, can you wonder at seeing, as you must ere long, a confederacy of free countries, formed for the apprehension or extinction of whoever pays, disciplines, or directs, under whatsoever title, those tremendous masses of human kind which consume the whole produce of their native land in depopulating another? Is it iniquitous or unnatural that laws be opposed to edicts, and Constitutions to despotism? O Señor Merino! there are yet things holy: all the barbarians and all the autocrats in the universe cannot make that word a byword to the Spaniard. Yes, there may be holy alliances; and the hour strikes for their establishment. This beautiful earth, these heavens in their magnificence and splendour, have seen things more lovely and more glorious than themselves. The throne of God is a speck of darkness, if you compare it with the heart that beats only and beats constantly to pour forth its blood for the preservation of our country! Invincible Spain! how many of thy children have laid this pure sacrifice on the altar! The Deity hath accepted it: and there are those who would cast its ashes to the winds!

If ever a perverseness of character, or the perfidy taught in courts, should induce a king of Spain to violate his oath, to massacre his subjects, to proscribe his friends, to imprison his defenders, to abolish the representation of the people, Spain will be drawn by resentment to do what policy in vain has whispered in the ear of generosity. She and Portugal will be one: nor will she be sensible of disgrace in exchanging a prince of French origin for a prince of Portuguese. After all there is a north-west passage to the golden shores of Freedom; and, if pirates infest the opener seas, brave adventurers will cut their way through it. Let kings tremble at nothing but their own fraudulence and

violence ; and never at popular assemblies, which alone can direct them unerringly.

*Merino.* Educated as kings are, by pious men, servants of God, they see a chimera in a popular assembly.

*Lacy.* Those who refuse to their people a national and just representation, calling it a chimera, will one day remember that he who purchases their affections at the price of a chimera, purchases them cheaply ; and those who, having promised the boon, retract it, will put their hand to the signature directed by a hand of iron. State after State comes forward in asserting its rights, as wave follows wave ; each acting upon each ; and the tempest is gathering in regions where no murmur or voice is audible. Portugal pants for freedom, in other words is free. With one foot in England and the other in Brazil, there was danger in withdrawing either : she appears however to have recovered her equipoise. Accustomed to fix her attention upon England, wisely will she act if she imitates her example in the union with Ireland ; a union which ought to cause no other regret than in having been celebrated so late. If, on the contrary, she believes that national power and prosperity are the peculiar gifts of independence, she must believe that England was more powerful and prosperous in the days of her heptarchy than fifty years ago. Algarve would find no more advantage in her independence of Portugal, than Portugal would find in continuing detached from the other portions of our peninsula. There were excellent reasons for declaring her independence at the time : there now are better, if better be possible, for a coalition. She, like ourselves, is in danger of losing her colonies : how can either party by any other means retrieve its loss ? Normandy and Brittany, after centuries of war, joined the other provinces of France : more centuries of



severer war would not sunder them. We have no such price to pay. Independence is always the sentiment that follows liberty ; and it is always the most ardently desired by that country which, supposing the administration of law to be similar and equal, derives the greatest advantage from the union. According to the state of society in two countries, to the justice or injustice of government, to proximity or distance, independence may be good or bad. Normandy and Brittany would have found it hurtful and pernicious : they would have been corrupted by bribery, and overrun by competitors, the more formidable and the more disastrous from a parity of force. They had not, however, so weighty reasons for union with France, as Portugal has with Spain.

*Merino.* To avoid the collision of king and people, we may think about an assembly to be composed of the higher clergy and principal nobility.

*Lacy.* What should produce any collision, any dissension or dissidence, between king and people ? Is the wisdom of a nation less than an individual's ? Can *it* not see its own interests : and ought *he* to see any other ? Surround the throne with state and splendour and magnificence, but withhold from it the means of corruption, which must overflow upon itself and sap it. To no intent or purpose can they ever be employed, unless to subvert the Constitution ; and beyond the paling of a Constitution a king is *fera naturæ*. Look at Russia and Turkey : how few of their czars and sultans have died a natural death !—unless indeed in such a state of society the most natural death is a violent one. I would not accustom men to daggers and poisons ; for which reason, among others, I would remove them as far as possible from despotism.

To talk of France is nugatory : England then, where



more causes are tried within the year than among us within ten, has only twelve judges criminal and civil, in her ordinary courts. A culprit, or indeed an innocent man, may lie six months in prison before his trial, on suspicion of having stolen a petticoat or pair of slippers. As for her civil laws, they are more contradictory, more dilatory, more complicated, more uncertain, more expensive, more inhumane, than any now in use among men. They who appeal to them for redress of injury suffer an aggravation of it; and when Justice comes down at last, she alights on ruins. Public opinion is the only bulwark against oppression, and the voice of wretchedness is upon most occasions too feeble to excite it. Law in England, and in most other countries of Europe, is the crown of injustice, burning and intolerable as that hammered and nailed upon the head of Zekkler, after he had been forced to eat the quivering flesh of his companions in insurrection. In the statutes of the North American United States, there is no such offence as libel upon the Government; because in that country there is no worthless wretch whose government leads to, or can be brought into contempt. This undefined and undefinable offence in England hath consigned many just men and eminent scholars to poverty and imprisonment, to incurable maladies, and untimely death. Law, like the Andalusian bull, lowers her head and shuts her eyes before she makes her push; and either she misses her object altogether, or she leaves it immersed in bloodshed.

When an action is brought by one subject against another, in which he seeks indemnity for an injury done to his property, his comforts, or his character, a jury awards the amount; but if some parasite of the king wishes to mend his fortune, after a run of bad luck at the gaming-table or of improvident bets on the race-course, he informs the

attorney-general that he has detected a libel on Majesty, which, unless it be chastised and checked by the timely interference of those blessed institutions whence they are great and glorious, would leave no man's office, or honour, or peace inviolable. It may happen that the writer, at worst, hath indulged his wit on some personal fault, some feature in the character far below the crown: this is enough for a prosecution; and the author, if found guilty, lies at the mercy of the judge. The jury in this case is never the awarder of damages. Are then the English laws equal for all? Recently there was a member of Parliament who declared to the people such things against the Government as were openly called seditious and libellous, both by his colleagues and his judges. He was condemned to pay a fine, amounting to less than the three-hundredth part of his property, and to be confined for three months—in an apartment more airy and more splendid than any in his own house. Another, no member of Parliament, wrote something ludicrous about Majesty, and was condemned, he and his brother, to pay the full half of their property, and to be confined among felons for two years! This confinement was deemed so flagrantly cruel, that the magistrates soon afterward allowed a little more light, a little more air, and better company; not, however, in separate wards, but separate prisons. The judge who pronounced the sentence is still living; he lives unbruised, unbranded, and he appears like a man among men.

*Merino.* Why not? He proved his spirit, firmness, and fidelity: in our country he would be appointed grand inquisitor on the next vacancy, and lead the queen to her seat at the first *auto da fê*. Idlers and philosophers may complain; but certainly this portion of the English institutions ought to be commended warmly by every true Spaniard,

every friend to the altar and the throne. And yet, General, you mention it in such a manner as would almost let a careless, inattentive hearer go away with the persuasion that you disapprove of it. Speculative and dissatisfied men are existing in all countries, even in Spain and England; but we have scourges in store for the pruriency of dissatisfaction, and cases and caps for the telescopes of speculation.

*Lacy.* The faultiness of the English laws is not complained of nor pointed out exclusively by the speculative or the sanguine, by the oppressed or the disappointed; it was the derision and scoff of George the Second, one of the bravest and most constitutional kings. "As to our laws," said he, "we pass near a hundred every session, which seem made for no other purpose but to afford us the pleasure of breaking them."

This is not reported by Whig or Tory, who change principles as they change places, but by a dispassionate, unambitious man of sound sense and in easy circumstances, a personal and intimate friend of the king, from whose lips he himself received it—Lord Waldegrave. Yet an Englishman thinks himself quite as free, and governed quite as rationally, as a citizen of the United States: so does a Chinese. Such is the hemlock that habitude administers to endurance; and so long is it in this torpor ere the heart sickens.

I am far from the vehemence of the English commander, Nelson—a man, however, who betrayed neither in war nor policy any deficiency of acuteness and judgment. He says unambiguously and distinctly in his letters, "All ministers of kings and princes are, in my opinion, as great scoundrels as ever lived."

Versatility, indecision, falsehood, and ingratitude, had

strongly marked, as he saw, the two principal ones of his country, Pitt and Fox ; the latter of whom openly turned honesty into derision, while the former sent it wrapped up decently to market. Now if all ministers of kings and princes are, what the admiral calls them from his experience, "as great scoundrels as ever lived," we must be as great fools as ever lived if we endure them : we should look for others.

*Merino.* Even that will not do : the new ones, possessing the same power and the same places, will be the same men.

*Lacy.* I am afraid then the change must not be only in the servants, but in the masters, and that we must not leave the choice to those who always choose "as great scoundrels as ever lived." Nelson was a person who had had much to do with the ministers of kings and princes ; none of his age had more,—an age in which the ministers had surely no less to do than those in any other age since the creation of the world. He was the best commander of his nation ; he was consulted and employed in every difficult and doubtful undertaking : he must have known them thoroughly. What meaning, then, shall we attribute to his words ? Shall we say that "as great scoundrels as ever lived" ought to govern the universe in perpetuity ? Or can we doubt that they must do so, if we suffer kings and princes to appoint them at each other's recommendation ?

*Merino.* Nelson was a heretic, a blasphemer, a revolutionist.

*Lacy.* On heresy and blasphemy I am incapable of deciding ; but never was there a more strenuous antagonist of revolutionary principles ; and upon this rock his glory split and foundered. When Sir William Hamilton declared to the Neapolitan insurgents, who had laid down their arms

before royal promises, that, his Government having engaged with the Allied Powers to eradicate revolutionary doctrines from Europe, he could not countenance the fulfilment of a capitulation which opposed the views of the *coalition*, what did Nelson? He tarnished the brightest sword in Europe, and devoted to the most insatiable of the Furies the purest blood! A Caroline and a Ferdinand, the most opprobrious of the human race and among the lowest in intellect, were permitted to riot in the slaughter of a Caraccioli.

The English Constitution, sir, is founded on revolutionary doctrines, and her kings acknowledge it. Recollect now the note of her diplomatist. Is England in Europe? If she is, which I venture not to assert, her rulers have declared their intention to eradicate the foundations of her liberties; and they have broken their word so often that I am inclined to believe they will attempt to recover their credit by keeping it strictly here. But the safest and least costly conquests for England would be those over the understandings and the hearts of men. They require no garrisons; they equip no navies; they encounter no tempests: they withdraw none from labour; they might extend from the arctic to the antarctic circle, leaving every Briton at his own fireside; and Earth like Ocean would have her great Pacific. The strength of England lies not in armaments and invasions: it lies in the omnipresence of her industry, and in the vivifying energies of her high civilisation. There are provinces she cannot grasp; there are islands she cannot hold fast; but there is neither island nor province, there is neither kingdom nor continent, which she could not draw to her side and fix there everlastingly, by saying the magic words, *Be Free*. Every land wherein she favours the sentiments of freedom, every land wherein she but forbids them to be stifled, is her own; a true ally, a willing tributary, an inseparable friend.



Principles hold those together whom power could only alienate.

*Merino.* I understand little these novel doctrines ; but Democracy herself must be contented with the principal features of the English Constitution. The great leaders are not taken from the ancient families.

*Lacy.* These push forward into Parliament young persons of the best talents they happen to pick up, whether at a ball or an opera, at a gaming-table or a college-mess, who from time to time, according to the offices they have filled, mount into the upper chamber and make room for others ; but it is understood that, in both chambers, they shall distribute honours and places at the command of their patrons. True, indeed, the ostensible heads are not of ancient or even of respectable parentage. The more wealthy and powerful peers send them from their boroughs into the House of Commons, as they send race-horses from their stables to Newmarket, and cocks from their training-yard to Doncaster. This is, in like manner, a pride, a luxury, a speculation. Even bankrupts have been permitted to sit there ; men who, when they succeeded, were a curse to their country worse than when they failed.

Let us rather collect together our former institutions, cherish all that brings us proud remembrances, brace our limbs for the efforts we must make, train our youth on our own arena, and never deem it decorous to imitate the limp of a wrestler writhing in his decrepitude.

The Chamber of Peers in England is the dormitory of freedom and of genius. Those who enter it have eaten the lotus, and forget their country. A minister, to suit his purposes, may make a dozen or a score or a hundred of peers in a day. If they are rich they are inactive ; if they are poor they are dependent. In general he chooses the



rich, who always want something ; for wealth is less easy to satisfy than poverty, luxury than hunger. He can dispense with their energy if he can obtain their votes, and they never abandon him unless he has contented them.

*Merino.* Impossible ! that any minister should make twenty, or even ten peers, during one convocation.

*Lacy.* The English, by a most happy metaphor, call them *batches*, seeing so many drawn forth at a time, with the rapidity of loaves from an oven, and moulded to the same ductility by less manipulation. A minister in that system has equally need of the active and the passive, as the creation has equally need of males and females. Do not imagine I would discredit or depreciate the House of Peers. Never will another land contain one composed of characters in general more honourable ; more distinguished for knowledge, for charity, for generosity, for equity ; more perfect in all the duties of men and citizens. Let it stand ; a nation should be accustomed to no changes, to no images but of strength and duration : let it stand, then, as a lofty and ornamental belfry, never to be taken down or lowered, until it threatens by its decay the congregation underneath ; but let none be excommunicated who refuse to copy it, whether from faultiness in their foundation or from deficiency in their materials. Different countries require different governments. Is the rose the only flower in the garden ? Is Hesperus the only star in the heavens ? We may be hurt by our *safeguards*, if we try new ones.

Don Britomarte Delciego took his daily siesta on the grass in the city-dyke of Barbastro : he shaded his face with his *sombrero*, and slept profoundly. One day, unfortunately, a gnat alighted on his nose and bit it. Don Britomarte roused himself ; and, remembering that he could enfold his arms in his mantle, took off a glove and covered the

unprotected part with it. Satisfied at the contrivance, he slept again ; and more profoundly than ever. Whether there was any savoury odour in the glove I know not : certain it is that some rats came from under the fortifications, and, perforating the new defence of Don Britomarte, made a breach in the salient angle which had suffered so lately by a less potent enemy ; and he was called from that day forward *the knight of the kid-skin visor*.

*Merino.* Sir, I do not understand stories : I never found wit or reason in them.

*Lacy.* England in the last twenty years has undergone a greater revolution than any she struggled to counteract—a revolution more awful, more pernicious. She alone of all the nations in the world hath suffered by that of France : she is become less wealthy by it, less free, less liberal, less moral. Half-a century ago she was represented chiefly by her country-gentlemen. Pitt made the richer peers ; the intermediate, pensioners ; the poorer, exiles ; and his benches were overflowed with “honourables” from the sugar-cask and indigo-bag. He changed all the features both of mind and matter. Old mansions were converted into workhouses and barracks : children who returned from school at the holidays stopped in their own villages, and asked why they stopped. More oaks followed him than ever followed Orpheus ; and more stones, a thousand to one, leaped down at his voice than ever leaped up at Amphion’s. Overladen with taxation, the gentlemen of England—a class the grandest in character that ever existed upon earth, the best informed, the most generous, the most patriotic—were driven from their residences into cities. Their authority ceased ; their example was altogether lost, and it appears by the calendars of the prisons, that two-thirds of the offenders were from the country ; whereas

until these disastrous times four-fifths were from the towns. To what a degree those of the towns themselves must have increased, may be supposed by the stagnation in many trades, and by the conversion of labourers and artisans to soldiers.

The country gentlemen, in losing their rank and condition, lost the higher and more delicate part of their principles. There decayed at once in them that robustness and that nobility of character, which men, like trees, acquire from standing separately. Deprived of their former occupations and amusements, and impatient of inactivity, they condescended to be members of gaming clubs in the fashionable cities, incurred new and worse expenses, and eagerly sought, from among the friendships they had contracted, those who might obtain for them or for their families some atom from the public dilapidation. Hence nearly all were subservient to the minister: those who were not were marked out as disaffected to the Constitution, or at best as singular men who courted celebrity from retirement.

Such was the state of the landed interest; and what was that of the commercial? Industrious tradesmen speculated; in other words, gamed. Bankers were coiners; not giving a piece of metal, but a scrap of paper. They who had thousands lent millions, and lost all. Slow and sure gains were discreditable; and nothing was a sight more common, more natural, or seen with more indifference, than fortunes rolling down from their immense accumulation. Brokers and insurers and jobbers, people whose education could not have been liberal, were now for the first time found at the assemblies and at the tables of the great, and were treated there with the first distinction. Every hand through which money passes was pressed affectionately. The viler part of what is democratical was

supported by the aristocracy ; the better of what is republican was thrown down. England, like one whose features are just now turned awry by an apoplexy, is ignorant of the change she has undergone, and is the more lethargic the more she is distorted. Not only hath she lost her bloom and spirit, but her form and gait, her voice and memory. The weakest of mortals was omnipotent in Parliament ; and being so, he dreamed in his drunkenness that he could compress the spirit of the times ; and before the fumes had passed away, he rendered the wealthiest of nations the most distressed. The spirit of the times is only to be made useful by catching it as it rises, to be managed only by concession, to be controlled only by compliancy. Like the powerful agent of late discovery, that impels vast masses across the ocean or raises them from the abysses of the earth, it performs everything by attention, nothing by force, and is fatal alike from coercion and from neglect. That government is the best which the people obey the most willingly and the most wisely ; that state of society in which the greatest number may live and educate their families becomingly, by unstrained bodily and unrestricted intellectual exertion : where superiority in office springs from worth, and where the chief magistrate hath no higher interest in perspective than the ascendancy of the laws. Nations are not ruined by war : for convents and churches, palaces and cities, are not nations. The Messenians and Jews and Araucanians saw their houses and temples levelled with the pavement ; the mightiness of the crash gave the stronger mind a fresh impulse, and it sprang high above the flames that consumed the last fragment. The ruin of a country is not the blight of corn, nor the weight and impetuosity of hailstones ; it is not inundation nor storm, it is not pestilence or famine : a few years, perhaps a single

one, may cover all traces of such calamity. But that country is too surely ruined in which morals are lost irretrievably to the greater part of the rising generation ; and there are they about to sink and perish, where the ruler has given, by an unrepressed and an unproved example, the lesson of bad faith.

*Merino.* Sir, I cannot hear such language.

*Lacy.* Why then converse with me ? Is the fault mine if such language be offensive ? Why should intolerance hatch an hypothesis, or increase her own alarm by the obstreperous chuckle of incubation ?

*Merino.* Kings stand in the place of God among us.

*Lacy.* I wish they would make way for the owner. They love God only when they fancy he has favoured their passions, and fear him only when they must buy him off. If indeed they be his vicegerents on earth, let them repress the wicked and exalt the virtuous. Wherever in the material world there is a grain of gold, it sinks to the bottom ; chaff floats over it : in the animal, the greatest and most sagacious of creatures hide themselves in woods and caverns, in morasses and solitudes, and we hear first of their existence when we find their bones. Do you perceive a resemblance anywhere ? If princes are desirous to imitate the Governor of the universe ; if they are disposed to obey him ; if they consult religion or reason, or, what oftener occupies their attention, the stability of power,—they will admit the institutions best adapted to render men honest and peaceable, industrious and contented. Otherwise let them be certain that, although they themselves may escape the chastisement they merit, their children and grandchildren will never be out of danger or out of fear. Calculations on the intensity of force are often just ; hardly ever so those on its durability.



*Merino.* As if truly that depended on men!—a blow against a superintending Providence! It always follows the pestilential breath that would sully the majesty of kings.

*Lacy.* Señor Merino, my name, if you have forgotten it, is Lacy: take courage and recollect yourself. The whole of my discourse hath tended to keep the majesty of kings unsullied, by preserving their honour inviolate. Any blow against a superintending Providence is too insane for reproach, too impotent for pity: and indeed what peril can by any one be apprehended from the Almighty, when he has Cura Merino to preach for him, and the Holy Inquisition to protect him?

*Merino.* I scorn the sneer, sir; and know not by what right, or after what resemblance, you couple my name with the Holy Inquisition which our Lord the King in his wisdom hath not yet re-established, and which the Holy Allies for the greater part have abolished in their dominions.

*Lacy.* This never would have been effected if the holy heads of the meek usurpers had not raised themselves above the crown; proving from doctors and confessors, from Old Testament and New, the privilege they possessed of whipping and burning and decapitating the wearer. The kings in their fright ran against the chalice of poison, by which many thousands of their subjects had perished, and by which their own hands were, after their retractings and writhings, ungauntleted, undirked, and paralysed.

Europe, Asia, America, sent up simultaneously to heaven a shout of joy at the subversion. Africa, seated among tamer monsters and addicted to milder superstitions, wondered at what burst and dayspring of beautitude the human race was celebrating around her so high and enthusiastic a jubilee.



*Merino.* I take my leave, General. May your Excellency live many years!

I breathe the pure street-air again. Traitor and atheist! I will denounce him. He has shaved for the last time: he shall never have Christian burial.

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## OLIVER CROMWELL AND WALTER NOBLE.

[Noble, whom Landor claimed as an ancestor, represented the city of Lichfield: he lived familiarly with the best patriots of the age, remonstrated with Cromwell, and retired from public life on the punishment of Charles.]

*Cromwell.* What brings thee back from Staffordshire, friend Walter?

*Noble.* I hope, General Cromwell, to persuade you that the death of Charles will be considered by all Europe as a most atrocious action.

*Cromwell.* Thou hast already persuaded me: what then?

*Noble.* Surely, then, you will prevent it, for your authority is great. Even those who upon their consciences found him guilty would remit the penalty of blood, some from policy, some from mercy. I have conversed with Hutchinson, with Ludlow, your friend and mine, with Henry Nevile, and Walter Long: you will oblige these worthy friends, and unite in your favour the suffrages of the truest and trustiest men living. There are many others, with whom I am in no habits of intercourse, who are known to entertain the same sentiments; and these also are

among the country gentlemen, to whom our parliament owes the better part of its reputation.

*Cromwell.* You country gentlemen bring with you into the People's House a freshness and sweet savour which our citizens lack mightily. I would fain merit your esteem, heedless of those pursy fellows from hulks and warehouses, with one ear lapped by the pen behind it, and the other an heirloom, as Charles would have had it, in Laud's star-chamber. Oh! they are proud and bloody men. My heart melts; but, alas! my authority is null: I am the servant of the Commonwealth. I will not, dare not, betray it. If Charles Stuart had threatened my death only, in the letter we ripped out of the saddle, I would have reproved him manfully and turned him adrift: but others are concerned; lives more precious than mine, worn as it is with fastings, prayers, long services, and preyed upon by a pouncing disease. The Lord hath led him into the toils laid for the innocent. Foolish man! he never could eschew evil counsel.

*Noble.* In comparison with you, he is but as a pinnacle to a buttress. I acknowledge his weaknesses, and cannot wink upon his crimes: but that which you visit as the heaviest of them perhaps was not so, although the most disastrous to both parties—the bearing of arms against his people. He fought for what he considered his hereditary property; we do the same: should we be hanged for losing a lawsuit?

*Cromwell.* No, unless it is the second. Thou talkest finely and foolishly, Wat, for a man of thy calm discernment. If a rogue holds a pistol to my breast, do I ask him who he is? Do I care whether his doublet be of cat-skin or of dog-skin? Fie upon such wicked sophisms! Marvellous, how the devil works upon good men's minds!

*Noble.* Charles was always more to be dreaded by his friends than by his enemies, and now by neither.

*Cromwell.* God forbid that Englishmen should be feared by Englishmen! but to be daunted by the weakest, to bend before the worst—I tell thee, Walter Noble, if Moses and the Prophets commanded me to this villainy, I would draw back and mount my horse.

*Noble.* I wish that our history, already too dark with blood, should contain, as far as we are concerned in it, some unpolluted pages.

*Cromwell.* 'Twere better, much better. Never shall I be called, I promise thee, an unnecessary shedder of blood. Remember, my good, prudent friend, of what materials our secretaries are composed: what hostility against all eminence, what rancour against all glory. Not only kingly power offends them, but every other; and they talk of *putting to the sword*, as if it were the quietest, gentlest, and most ordinary thing in the world. The knaves even dictate from their stools and benches to men in armour, bruised and bleeding for them; and with school-dame's scourges in their fists do they give counsel to those who protect them from the cart and halter. In the name of the Lord, I must spit outright (or worse) upon these crackling bouncing firebrands, before I can make them tractable.

*Noble.* I lament their blindness; but follies wear out the faster by being hard run upon. This fermenting sourness will presently turn vapid, and people will cast it out. I am not surprised that you are discontented and angry at what thwarts your better nature. But come, Cromwell, overlook them, despise them, and erect to yourself a glorious name by sparing a mortal enemy.

*Cromwell.* A glorious name, by God's blessing, I will erect; and all our fellow-labourers shall rejoice at it: but I

see better than they do the blow descending on them, and my arm better than theirs can ward it off. Noble, thy heart overflows with kindness for Charles Stuart: if he were at liberty to-morrow by thy intercession, he would sign thy death-warrant the day after, for serving the Commonwealth. A generation of vipers! there is nothing upright nor grateful in them: never was there a drop of even Scotch blood in their veins. Indeed, we have a clew to their bedchamber still hanging on the door, and I suspect that an Italian fiddler or French valet has more than once crossed the current.

*Noble.* That may be: nor indeed is it credible that any royal or courtly family has gone on for three generations without a spur from interloper. Look at France! some stout Parisian saint performed the last miracle there.

*Cromwell.* Now thou talkest gravely and sensibly: I could hear thee discourse thus for hours together.

*Noble.* Hear me, Cromwell, with equal patience on matters more important. We all have our sufferings: why increase one another's wantonly? Be the blood Scotch or English, French or Italian, a drummer's or a buffoon's, it carries a soul upon its stream; and every soul has many places to touch at, and much business to perform, before it reaches its ultimate destination. Abolish the power of Charles; extinguish not his virtues. Whatever is worthy to be loved for anything is worthy to be preserved. A wise and dispassionate legislator, if any such should arise among men, will not condemn to death him who has done, or is likely to do, more service than injury to society. Blocks and gibbets are the nearest objects to ours, and their business is never with virtues or with hopes.

*Cromwell.* Walter! Walter! we laugh at speculators.

*Noble.* Many indeed are ready enough to laugh at

speculators, because many profit, or expect to profit, by established and widening abuses. Speculations toward evil lose their name by adoption ; speculations toward good are for ever speculations, and he who hath proposed them is a chimerical and silly creature. Among the matters under this denomination I never find a cruel project, I never find an oppressive or unjust one : how happens it ?

*Cromwell.* Proportions should exist in all things. Sovereigns are paid higher than others for their office ; they should therefore be punished more severely for abusing it, even if the consequences of this abuse were in nothing more grievous or extensive. We cannot clap them in the stocks conveniently, nor whip them at the market-place. Where there is a crown there must be an axe : I would keep it there only.

*Noble.* Lop off the rotten, press out the poisonous, preserve the rest ; let it suffice to have given this memorable example of national power and justice.

*Cromwell.* Justice is perfect ; an attribute of God : we must not trifle with it.

*Noble.* Should we be less merciful to our fellow-creatures than to our domestic animals ? Before we deliver them to be killed, we weigh their services against their inconveniences. On the foundation of policy, when we have no better, let us erect the trophies of humanity : let us consider that, educated in the same manner and situated in the same position, we ourselves might have acted as reprovably. Abolish that for ever which must else for ever generate abuses ; and attribute the faults of the man to the office, not the faults of the office to the man.

*Cromwell.* I have no bowels for hypocrisy, and I abominate and detest kingship.

*Noble.* I abominate and detest hangmanship ; but in



certain stages of society both are necessary. Let them go together ; we want neither now.

*Cromwell.* Men, like nails, lose their usefulness when they lose their direction and begin to bend : such nails are then thrown into the dust or into the furnace. I must do my duty ; I must accomplish what is commanded me ; I must not be turned aside. I am loth to be cast into the furnace or the dust ; but God's will be done ! Prythee, Wat, since thou readest, as I see, the books of philosophers, didst thou ever hear of Digby's remedies by sympathy ?

*Noble.* Yes, formerly.

*Cromwell.* Well, now, I protest, I do believe there is something in them. To cure my headache, I must breathe a vein in the neck of Charles.

*Noble.* Oliver, Oliver ! others are wittiest over wine, thou over blood : cold-hearted, cruel man.

*Cromwell.* Why, dost thou verily think me so, Walter ? Perhaps thou art right in the main : but he alone who fashioned me in my mother's womb, and who sees things deeper than we do, knows that.

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## LORD BROOKE AND SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

[ Lord Brooke is less known than the personage with whom he converses, and upon whose friendship he had the virtue and good sense to found his chief distinction. On his monument at Warwick, written by himself, we read that he was servant of Queen Elizabeth, counsellor of King James, and friend of Sir Philip Sidney. His style is stiff, but his sentiments are sound and manly.]

*Brooke.* I come again unto the woods and unto the wilds of Penshurst, whither my heart and the friend of my heart have long invited me.



*Sidney.* Welcome, welcome! And now, Greville, seat yourself under this oak; since if you had hungered or thirsted from your journey, you would have renewed the alacrity of your old servants in the hall.

*Brooke.* In truth I did; for no otherwise the good household would have it. The birds met me first, affrightened by the tossing up of caps; and by these harbingers I knew who were coming. When my palfrey eyed them askance for their clamorousness, and shrank somewhat back, they quarrelled with him almost before they saluted me, and asked him many pert questions. What a pleasant spot, Sidney, have you chosen here for meditation! A solitude is the audience-chamber of God. Few days in our year are like this: there is a fresh pleasure in every fresh posture of the limbs, in every turn the eye takes.

“Youth! credulous of happiness, throw down  
Upon this turf thy wallet,—stored and swoln  
With morrow-morns, bird-eggs, and bladders burst—  
That tires thee with its wagging to and fro:  
Thou too wouldst breathe more freely for it, Age!  
Who lackest heart to laugh at life’s deceit.”

It sometimes requires a stout push, and sometimes a sudden resistance, in the wisest men, not to become for a moment the most foolish. What have I done? I have fairly challenged you, so much my master.

*Sidney.* You have warmed me: I must cool a little and watch my opportunity. So now, Greville, return you to your invitations, and I will clear the ground for the company; for Youth, for Age, and whatever comes between, with kindred and dependencies. Verily we need no taunts like those in your verses: here we have few vices, and consequently few repinings. I take especial care that my young labourers and farmers shall never be idle, and I

supply them with bows and arrows, with bowls and nine-pins, for their Sunday evening, lest they drink and quarrel. In church they are taught to love God ; after church they are practised to love their neighbour : for business on work-days keeps them apart and scattered, and on market-days they are prone to a rivalry bordering on malice, as competitors for custom. Goodness does not more certainly make men happy than happiness makes them good. We must distinguish between felicity and prosperity ; for prosperity leads often to ambition, and ambition to disappointment : the course is then over ; the wheel turns round but once ; while the reaction of goodness and happiness is perpetual.

*Brooke.* You reason justly and you act rightly. Piety—warm, soft, and passive as the ether round the throne of Grace—is made callous and inactive by kneeling too much : her vitality faints under rigorous and wearisome observances. A forced match between a man and his religion sours his temper, and leaves a barren bed.

*Sidney.* Desire of lucre, the worst and most general country vice, arises here from the necessity of looking to small gains ; it is, however, but the tartar that encrusts economy.

*Brooke.* Oh that anything so monstrous should exist in this profusion and prodigality of blessings ! The herbs, elastic with health, seem to partake of sensitive and animated life, and to feel under my hand the benediction I would bestow on them. What a hum of satisfaction in God's creatures ! How is it, Sidney, the smallest do seem the happiest ?

*Sidney.* Compensation for their weaknesses and their fears ; compensation for the shortness of their existence. Their spirits mount upon the sunbeam above the eagle ;

and they have more enjoyment in their one summer than the elephant in his century.

*Brooke.* Are not also the little and lowly in our species the most happy?

*Sidney.* I would not willingly try nor over-curiously examine it. We, Greville, are happy in these parks and forests: we were happy in my close winter-walk of box and laurustine. In our earlier days did we not emboss our bosoms with the daffodils, and shake them almost unto shedding with our transport? Ay, my friend, there is a greater difference, both in the stages of life and in the seasons of the year, than in the conditions of men: yet the healthy pass through the seasons, from the clement to the inclement, not only unreluctantly but rejoicingly, knowing that the worst will soon finish, and the best begin anew; and we are desirous of pushing forward into every stage of life, excepting that alone which ought reasonably to allure us most, as opening to us the *Via Sacra*, along which we move in triumph to our eternal country. We may in some measure frame our minds for the reception of happiness, for more or for less; we should, however, well consider to what port we are steering in search of it, and that even in the richest its quantity is but too exhaustible. There is a sickliness in the firmest of us, which induceth us to change our side, though reposing ever so softly: yet, wittingly or unwittingly, we turn again soon into our old position.

God hath granted unto both of us hearts easily contented, hearts fitted for every station, because fitted for every duty. What appears the dullest may contribute most to our genius; what is most gloomy may soften the seeds and relax the fibres of gaiety. We enjoy the solemnity of the spreading oak above us: perhaps we owe to it in part the mood of our minds at this instant; perhaps an inanimate

thing supplies me, while I am speaking, with whatever I possess of animation. Do you imagine that any contest of shepherds can afford them the same pleasure as I receive from the description of it ; or that even in their loves, however innocent and faithful, they are so free from anxiety as I am while I celebrate them ? The exertion of intellectual power, of fancy and imagination, keeps from us greatly more than their wretchedness, and affords us greatly more than their enjoyment. We are motes in the midst of generations : we have our sunbeams to circuit and climb. Look at the summits of the trees around us, how they move, and the loftiest the most : nothing is at rest within the compass of our view, except the grey moss on the park-pales. Let it eat away the dead oak, but let it not be compared with the living one.

Poets are in general prone to melancholy ; yet the most plaintive ditty hath imparted a fuller joy, and of longer duration, to its composer, than the conquest of Persia to the Macedonian. A bottle of wine bringeth as much pleasure as the acquisition of a kingdom, and not unlike it in kind : the senses in both cases are confused and perverted.

*Brooke.* Merciful Heaven ! and for the fruition of an hour's drunkenness, from which they must awaken with heaviness, pain, and terror, men consume a whole crop of their kind at one harvest-home. Shame upon those light ones who carol at the feast of blood ! and worse upon those graver ones who nail upon their escutcheon the name of great ! Ambition is but Avarice on stilts and masked. God sometimes sends a famine, sometimes a pestilence, and sometimes a hero, for the chastisement of mankind ; none of them surely for our admiration. Only some cause like unto that which is now scattering the mental fog of the

Netherlands, and is preparing them for the fruits of freedom, can justify us in drawing the sword abroad.

*Sidney.* And only the accomplishment of our purpose can permit us again to sheathe it ; for the aggrandisement of our neighbour is nought of detriment to us : on the contrary, if we are honest and industrious, his wealth is ours. We have nothing to dread while our laws are equitable and our impositions light : but children fly from mothers who strip and scourge them. We are come to an age when we ought to read and speak plainly what our discretion tells us is fit : we are not to be set in a corner for mockery and derision, with our hands hanging down motionless, and our pockets turned inside-out.

But away, away with politics : let not this city-stench infect our fresh country air !

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## SOUTHEY AND PORSON.

*Porson.* I suspect, Mr. Southey, you are angry with me for the freedom with which I have spoken of your poetry and Wordsworth's.

*Southey.* What could have induced you to imagine it, Mr. Professor ? You have indeed bent your eyes upon me, since we have been together, with somewhat of fierceness and defiance : I presume you fancied me to be a commentator. You wrong me in your belief that any opinion on my poetical works hath molested me ; but you afford me more than compensation in supposing me acutely sensible of injustice done to Wordsworth. If we must converse on



these topics, we will converse on him. What man ever existed who spent a more inoffensive life, or adorned it with nobler studies?

*Porson.* I believe so; and they who attack him with virulence are men of as little morality as reflection. I have demonstrated that one of them, he who wrote the *Pursuits of Literature*, could not construe a Greek sentence or scan a verse; and I have fallen on the very *Index* from which he drew out his forlorn hope on the parade. This is incomparably the most impudent fellow I have met with in the course of my reading, which has lain, you know, in a province where impudence is no rarity.

I had visited a friend in *King's Road* when he entered.

"Have you seen the *Review*?" cried he. "Worse than ever! I am resolved to insert a paragraph in the papers, declaring that I had no concern in the last number."

"Is it so very bad?" said I, quietly.

"Infamous! detestable!" exclaimed he.

"Sit down, then: nobody will believe you," was my answer.

Since that morning he has discovered that I drink harder than usual, that my faculties are wearing fast away, that once, indeed, I had some Greek in my head, but—he then claps the forefinger to the side of his nose, turns his eye slowly upward, and looks compassionately and calmly.

*Southey.* Come, Mr. Porson, grant him his merits: no critic is better contrived to make any work a monthly one, no writer more dexterous in giving a finishing touch.

*Porson.* The plagiary has a greater latitude of choice than we; and if he brings home a parsnip or turnip-top, when he could as easily have pocketed a nectarine or a pineapple, he must be a blockhead. I never heard the name of



the *Pursuer of Literature*, who has little more merit in having stolen than he would have had if he had never stolen at all; and I have forgotten that other man's, who evinced his fitness to be the censor of our age, by a translation of the most naked and impure satires of antiquity—those of Juvenal, which owe their preservation to the partiality of the Friars. I shall entertain an unfavourable opinion of him if he has translated them well: pray, has he?

*Southey.* Indeed, I do not know. I read poets for their poetry, and to extract that nutriment of the intellect and of the heart which poetry should contain. I never listen to the swans of the cesspool, and must declare that nothing is heavier to me than rottenness and corruption.

*Porson.* You are right, sir, perfectly right. A translator of Juvenal would open a public drain to look for a needle, and may miss it. My nose is not easily offended; but I must have something to fill my belly. Come, we will lay aside the scrip of the transpositor and the pouch of the pursuer, in reserve for the days of unleavened bread; and again, if you please, to the lakes and mountains. Now we are both in better humour, I must bring you to a confession that in your friend Wordsworth there is occasionally a little trash.

*Southey.* A haunch of venison would be trash to a Brahmin, a bottle of Burgundy to the xerif of Mecca. We are guided by precept, by habit, by taste, by constitution. Hitherto our sentiments on poetry have been delivered down to us from authority; and if it can be demonstrated, as I think it may be, that the authority is inadequate, and that the dictates are often inapplicable and often misinterpreted, you will allow me to remove the cause out of court. Every man can see what is very bad in a poem; almost

every one can see what is very good : but you, Mr. Porson, who have turned over all the volumes of all the commentators, will inform me whether I am right or wrong in asserting that no critic hath yet appeared who hath been able to fix or to discern the exact degrees of excellence above a certain point.

*Porson.* None.

*Southey.* The reason is, because the eyes of no one have been upon a level with it. Supposing, for the sake of argument, the contest of Hesiod and Homer to have taken place : the judges who decided in favour of the worse, and he, indeed, in the poetry has little merit, may have been elegant, wise, and conscientious men. Their decision was in favour of that to the species of which they had been the most accustomed. Corinna was preferred to Pindar no fewer than five times, and the best judges in Greece gave her the preference ; yet whatever were her powers, and beyond a question they were extraordinary, we may assure ourselves that she stood many degrees below Pindar. Nothing is more absurd than the report that the judges were prepossessed by her beauty. Plutarch tells us that she was much older than her competitor, who consulted her judgment in his earlier odes. Now, granting their first competition to have been when Pindar was twenty years old, and that the others were in the years succeeding, her beauty must have been somewhat on the decline ; for in Greece there are few women who retain the graces, none who retain the bloom of youth, beyond the twenty-third year. Her countenance, I doubt not, was expressive : but expression, although it gives beauty to men, makes women pay dearly for its stamp, and pay soon. Nature seems, in protection to their loveliness, to have ordered that they who are our superiors in quickness and sensibility should be little

disposed to laborious thought, or to long excursions in the labyrinths of fancy. We may be convinced that the verdict of the judges was biassed by nothing else than the habitudes of thinking; we may be convinced, too, that living in an age when poetry was cultivated highly, and selected from the most acute and the most dispassionate, they were subject to no greater errors of opinion than are the learned messmates of our English colleges.

*Porson.* You are more liberal in your largesses to the fair Greeks than a friend of mine was, who resided in Athens to acquire the language. He assured me that beauty there was in bud at thirteen, in full blossom at fifteen, losing a leaf or two every day at seventeen, trembling on the thorn at nineteen, and under the tree at twenty.

*Southey.* Mr. Porson, it does not appear to me that anything more is necessary, in the first instance, than to interrogate our hearts in what manner they have been affected. If the ear is satisfied; if at one moment a tumult is aroused in the breast, and tranquillised at another, with a perfect consciousness of equal power exerted in both cases; if we rise up from the perusal of the work with a strong excitement to thought, to imagination, to sensibility; above all, if we sat down with some propensities toward evil, and walk away with much stronger toward good, in the midst of a world which we never had entered and of which we never had dreamed before—shall we perversely put on again the *old man* of criticism, and dissemble that we have been conducted by a most beneficent and most potent genius? Nothing proves to me so manifestly in what a pestiferous condition are its lazarettos, as when I observe how little hath been objected against those who have substituted words for things, and how much against those who have reinstated things for words.

Let Wordsworth prove to the world that there may be animation without blood and broken bones, and tenderness remote from the stews. Some will doubt it; for even things the most evident are often but little perceived and strangely estimated. Swift ridiculed the music of Handel and the generalship of Marlborough; Pope the perspicacity and the scholarship of Bentley; Gray the abilities of Shaftesbury and the eloquence of Rousseau. Shakespeare hardly found those who would collect his tragedies; Milton was read from godliness; Virgil was antiquated and rustic; Cicero, Asiatic. What a rabble has persecuted my friend! An elephant is born to be consumed by ants in the midst of his unapproachable solitudes: Wordsworth is the prey of Jeffrey. Why repine? Let us rather amuse ourselves with allegories, and recollect that God in the creation left his noblest creature at the mercy of a serpent.

*Porson.* Wordsworth goes out of his way to be attacked; he picks up a piece of dirt, throws it on the carpet in the midst of the company, and cries, *This is a better man than any of you!* He does indeed mould the base material into what form he chooses; but why not rather invite us to contemplate it than challenge us to condemn it? Here surely is false taste.

*Southey.* The principal and the most general accusation against him is, that the vehicle of his thoughts is unequal to them. Now did ever the judges at the Olympic games say, "We would have awarded to you the meed of victory, if your chariot had been equal to your horses: it is true they have won; but the people are displeased at a car neither new nor richly gilt, and without a gryphon or sphinx engraved on the axle?" You admire simplicity in Euripides; you censure it in Wordsworth: believe me, sir,

it arises in neither from penury of thought—which seldom has produced it—but from the strength of temperance, and at the suggestion of principle.

Take up a poem of Wordsworth's and read it—I would rather say, read them all; and, knowing that a mind like yours must grasp closely what comes within it, I will then appeal to you whether any poet of our country, since Milton, hath exerted greater powers with less of strain and less of ostentation. I would, however, by his permission, lay before you for this purpose a poem which is yet unpublished and incomplete.

*Porson.* Pity, with such abilities, he does not imitate the ancients somewhat more.

*Southey.* Whom did they imitate? If his genius is equal to theirs he has no need of a guide. He also will be an ancient; and the very counterparts of those who now decry him will extol him a thousand years hence in malignity to the moderns.

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## THE ABBÉ DELILLE AND WALTER LANDOR.

THE Abbé Delille was the happiest of creatures, when he could weep over the charms of innocence and the country in some crowded and fashionable circle at Paris. We embraced most pathetically on our first meeting there, as if the one were condemned to quit the earth, the other to live upon it.

*Delille.* You are reported to have said that descriptive



poetry has all the merits of a handkerchief that smells of roses?

*Landor.* This, if I said it, is among the things which are neither false enough nor true enough to be displeasing. But the Abbé Delille has merits of his own. To translate Milton well is more laudable than originality in trifling matters; just as to transport an obelisk from Egypt, and to erect it in one of the squares, must be considered a greater labour than to build a new chandler's shop.

*Delille.* Milton is indeed extremely difficult to translate; for, however noble and majestic, he is sometimes heavy, and often rough and unequal.

*Landor.* Dear Abbé! porphyry is heavy, gold is heavier; Ossa and Olmypyus are rough and unequal; the steppes of Tartary, though high, are of uniform elevation: there is not a rock, nor a birch, nor a cytusus, nor an arbutus upon them great enough to shelter a new-dropped lamb. Level the Alps one with another, and where is their sublimity? Raise up the vale of Tempe to the downs above, and where are those sylvan creeks and harbours in which the imagination watches while the soul reposes; those recesses in which the gods partook the weaknesses of mortals, and mortals the enjoyments of the gods?

You have treated our poet with courtesy and distinction; in your trimmed and measured dress, he might be taken for a Frenchman. Do not think me flattering. You have conducted Eve from Paradise to Paris, and she really looks prettier and smarter than before she tripped. With what elegance she rises from a most awful dream! You represent her (I repeat your expression) as springing up *en sursaut*, as if you had caught her asleep and tickled the young creature on that sofa.

Homer and Virgil have been excelled in sublimity by



Shakespeare and Milton, as the Caucasus and Atlas of the old world by the Andes and Teneriffe of the new ; but you would embellish them all.

*Delille.* I owe to Voltaire my first sentiment of admiration for Milton and Shakespeare.

*Landor.* He stuck to them as a woodpecker to an old forest-tree, only for the purpose of picking out what was rotten : he has made the holes deeper than he found them, and, after all his cries and chatter, has brought home but scanty sustenance to his starveling nest.

*Delille.* You must acknowledge that there are fine verses in his tragedies.

*Landor.* Whenever such is the first observation, be assured, M. l'Abbé, that the poem, if heroic or dramatic, is bad. Should a work of this kind be excellent, we say, "How admirably the characters are sustained ! What delicacy of discrimination ! There is nothing to be taken away or altered without an injury to the part or to the whole." We may afterward descend on the versification. In poetry, there is a greater difference between the good and the excellent than there is between the bad and the good. Poetry has no golden mean ; mediocrity here is of another metal, which Voltaire however had skill enough to encrust and polish. In the least wretched of his tragedies, whatever is tolerable is Shakespeare's ; but, gracious Heaven ! how deteriorated ! When he pretends to extol a poet he chooses some defective part, and renders it more so whenever he translates it. I will repeat a few verses from Metastasio in support of my assertion. Metastasio was both a better critic and a better poet, although of the second order in each quality ; his tyrants are less philosophical, and his chambermaids less dogmatic. Voltaire was, however, a man of abilities, and author of many passable epigrams,

beside those which are contained in his tragedies and heroics ; yet it must be confessed that, like your Parisian lackeys, they are usually the smartest when out of place.

*Delille.* What you call epigram gives life and spirit to grave works, and seems principally wanted to relieve a long poem. I do not see why what pleases us in a star should not please us in a constellation.

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## DIOGENES AND PLATO.

[This is throughout a criticism of Plato, Diogenes gaining an easy victory at every point. Landor, who loved concrete thought and hated all forms of mysticism, had formed a very unfavourable opinion of Plato, and often goes out of his way to attack him. He frequently defends the character and philosophy of Diogenes, and speaks of him elsewhere as the wisest man of his time.]

*Diogenes.* Stop! stop! come hither! Why lookest thou so scornfully and askance upon me?

*Plato.* Let me go! loose me! I am resolved to pass.

*Diogenes.* Nay, then, by Jupiter and this tub! thou leavest three good ells of Milesian cloth behind thee. Whither wouldst thou amble?

*Plato.* I am not obliged in courtesy to tell you.

*Diogenes.* Upon whose errand? Answer me directly.

*Plato.* Upon my own.

*Diogenes.* Oh, then I will hold thee yet awhile. If it were upon another's, it might be a hardship to a good citizen, though not to a good philosopher.

*Plato.* That can be no impediment to my release: you do not think me one.

*Diogenes.* No, by my Father Jove !

*Plato.* Your father !

*Diogenes.* Why not ? Thou shouldst be the last man to doubt it. Hast not thou declared it irrational to refuse our belief to those who assert that they are begotten by the gods, though the assertion (these are thy words) be unfounded on reason or probability ? In me there is a chance of it : whereas in the generation of such people as thou art fondest of frequenting, who claim it loudly, there are always too many competitors to leave it probable.

*Plato.* Those who speak against the great do not usually speak from morality, but from envy.

*Diogenes.* Thou hast a glimpse of the truth in this place, but as thou hast already shown thy ignorance in attempting to prove to me what a *man* is, ill can I expect to learn from thee what is a *great man*.

*Plato.* No doubt your experience and intercourse will afford me the information.

*Diogenes.* Attend, and take it. The great man is he who hath nothing to fear and nothing to hope from another. It is he who, while he demonstrates the iniquity of the laws, and is able to correct them, obeys them peaceably. It is he who looks on the ambitious both as weak and fraudulent. It is he who hath no disposition or occasion for any kind of deceit, no reason for being or for appearing different from what he is. It is he who can call together the most select company when it pleases him.

*Plato.* Excuse my interruption. In the beginning of your definition I fancied that you were designating your own person, as most people do in describing what is admirable ; now I find that you have some other in contemplation.

*Diogenes.* I thank thee for allowing me what perhaps I

do possess, but what I was not then thinking of ; as is often the case with rich possessors : in fact, the latter part of the description suits me as well as any portion of the former.

*Plato.* You may call together the best company, by using your hands in the call, as you did with me ; otherwise I am not sure that you would succeed in it.

*Diogenes.* My thoughts are my company ; I can bring them together, select them, detain them, dismiss them. Imbecile and vicious men cannot do any of these things. Their thoughts are scattered, vague, uncertain, cumbersome : and the worst stick to them the longest ; many indeed by choice, the greater part by necessity, and accompanied, some by weak wishes, others by vain remorse.

*Plato.* Is there nothing of greatness, O Diogenes ! in exhibiting how cities and communities may be governed best, how morals may be kept the purest, and power become the most stable ?

*Diogenes.* *Something* of greatness does not constitute the great man. Let me however see him who hath done what thou sayest : he must be the most universal and the most indefatigable traveller, he must also be the oldest creature, upon earth.

*Plato.* How so ?

*Diogenes.* Because he must know perfectly the climate, the soil, the situation, the peculiarities, of the races, of their allies, of their enemies ; he must have sounded their harbours, he must have measured the quantity of their arable land and pasture, of their woods and mountains ; he must have ascertained whether there are fisheries on their coasts, and even what winds are prevalent. On these causes, with some others, depend the bodily strength, the numbers, the wealth, the wants, the capacities of the people.

*Plato.* Such are low thoughts.

*Diogenes.* The bird of wisdom flies low, and seeks her food under hedges : the eagle himself would be starved if he always soared aloft and against the sun. The sweetest fruit grows near the ground, and the plants that bear it require ventilation and lopping. Were this not to be done in thy garden, every walk and alley, every plot and border, would be covered with runners and roots, with boughs and suckers. We want no poets or logicians or metaphysicians to govern us : we want practical men, honest men, continent men, unambitious men, fearful to solicit a trust, slow to accept, and resolute never to betray one. Experimentalists may be the best philosophers : they are always the worst politicians. Teach people their duties, and they will know their interests. Change as little as possible, and correct as much.

Philosophers are absurd from many causes, but principally from laying out unthriftilly their distinctions. They set up four virtues : fortitude, prudence, temperance, and justice. Now a man may be a very bad one, and yet possess three out of the four. Every cut-throat must, if he has been a cut-throat on many occasions, have more fortitude and more prudence than the greater part of those whom we consider as the best men. And what cruel wretches, both executioners and judges, have been strictly just ! how little have they cared what gentleness, what generosity, what genius, their sentence hath removed from the earth ! Temperance and beneficence contain all other virtues. Take them home, Plato ; split them, expound them ; do what thou wilt with them, if thou but use them.

Before I gave thee this lesson, which is a better than thou ever gavest any one, and easier to remember, thou wert accusing me of invidiousness and malice against those



whom thou callest the great, meaning to say the powerful. Thy imagination, I am well aware, had taken its flight toward Sicily, where thou seekest thy great man, as earnestly and undoubtingly as Ceres sought her Persephone, Faith! honest Plato, I have no reason to envy thy worthy friend Dionysius. Look at my nose! A lad seven or eight years old threw an apple at me yesterday, while I was gazing at the clouds, and gave me nose enough for two moderate men. Instead of such a godsend, what should I have thought of my fortune if, after living all my lifetime among golden vases, rougher than my hand with their emeralds and rubies, their engravings and embossments; among Parian caryatides and porphyry sphinxes; among philosophers with rings upon their fingers and linen next their skin; and among singing-boys and dancing-girls, to whom alone thou speakest intelligibly—I ask thee again, what should I in reason have thought of my fortune, if, after these facilities and superfluities, I had at last been pelted out of my house, not by one young rogue, but by thousands of all ages, and not with an apple (I wish I could say a rotten one), but with pebbles and broken pots; and, to crown my deserts, had been compelled to become the teacher of so promising a generation? Great men, forsooth! thou knowest at last who they are.

*Plato.* There are great men of various kinds.

*Diogenes.* No, by my beard, are there not!

*Plato.* What! are there not great captains, great geometricians, great dialecticians?

*Diogenes.* Who denied it? A great man was the postulate. Try thy hand now at the powerful one.

*Plato.* On seeing the exercise of power, a child cannot doubt who is powerful, more or less; for power is relative. All men are weak, not only if compared to the



Demiurgos, but if compared to the sea or the earth, or certain things upon each of them, such as elephants and whales. So placid and tranquil is the scene around us, we can hardly bring to mind the images of strength and force, the precipices, the abysses——

*Diogenes.* Prythee hold thy loose tongue, twinkling and glittering like a serpent's in the midst of luxuriance and rankness! Did never this reflection of thine warn thee that, in human life, the precipices and abysses would be much farther from our admiration if we were less inconsiderate, selfish, and vile? I will not however stop thee long, for thou wert going on quite consistently. As thy great men are fighters and wranglers, so thy mighty things upon the earth and sea are troublesome and intractable encumbrances. Thou preceivedst not what was greater in the former case, neither art thou aware what is greater in this. Didst thou feel the gentle air that passed us?

*Plato.* I did not, just then.

*Diogenes.* That air, so gentle, so imperceptible to thee, is more powerful not only than all the creatures that breathe and live by it; not only than all the oaks of the forest, which it rears in an age and shatters in a moment; not only than all the monsters of the sea, but than the sea itself, which it tosses up into foam, and breaks against every rock in its vast circumference; for it carries in its bosom, with perfect calm and composure, the incontrollable ocean and the peopled earth, like an atom of a feather.

To the world's turmoils and pageantries is attracted, not only the admiration of the populace, but the zeal of the orator, the enthusiasm of the poet, the investigation of the historian, and the contemplation of the philosopher: yet how silent and invisible are they in the depths of air! Do I say in those depths and deserts? No; I say in the

distance of a swallow's flight,—at the distance she rises above us, ere a sentence brief as this could be uttered.

What are its mines and mountains? Fragments welded up and dislocated by the expansion of water from below; the most part reduced to mud, the rest to splinters. Afterwards sprang up fire in many places, and again tore and mangled the mutilated carcass, and still growls over it.

What are its cities and ramparts, and moles and monuments? Segments of a fragment, which one man puts together and another throws down. Here we stumble upon thy great ones at their work. Show me now, if thou canst, in history, three great warriors, or three great statesmen, who have acted otherwise than spiteful children.

*Plato.* I will begin to look for them in history when I have discovered the same number in the philosophers or the poets. A prudent man searches in his own garden after the plant he wants, before he casts his eyes over the stalls in Kenkrea or Keramicos.

Returning to your observation on the potency of the air, I am not ignorant or unmindful of it. May I venture to express my opinion to you, Diogenes, that the earlier discoverers and distributors of wisdom (which wisdom lies among us in ruins and remnants, partly distorted and partly concealed by theological allegory) meant by Jupiter the air in its agitated state; by Juno the air in its quiescent. These are the great agents, and therefore called the king and queen of the gods. Jupiter is denominated by Homer the *compeller of clouds*: Juno receives them, and remits them in showers to plants and animals.

I may trust you, I hope, O Diogenes?

*Diogenes.* Thou mayest lower the gods in my presence, as safely as men in the presence of Timon.

*Plato.* I would not lower them: I would exalt them.

*Diogenes.* More foolish and presumptuous still !

*Plato.* Fair words, O Sinopean ! I protest to you my aim is truth.

*Diogenes.* I cannot lead thee where of a certainty thou mayest always find it ; but I will tell thee what it is. Truth is a point ; the subtilest and finest ; harder than adamant ; never to be broken, worn away, or blunted. Its only bad quality is, that it is sure to hurt those who touch it ; and likely to draw blood, perhaps the life-blood, of those who press earnestly upon it. Let us away from this narrow lane skirted with hemlock, and pursue our road again through the wind and dust, toward the *great* man and the *powerful*. Him I would call the powerful one who controls the storms of his mind, and turns to good account the worst accidents of his fortune. The great man, I was going on to demonstrate, is somewhat more. He must be able to do this, and he must have an intellect which puts into motion the intellect of others.

*Plato.* Socrates, then, was your great man.

*Diogenes.* He was indeed ; nor can all thou hast attributed to him ever make me think the contrary. I wish he could have kept a little more at home, and have thought it as well worth his while to converse with his own children as with others.

*Plato.* He knew himself born for the benefit of the human race.

*Diogenes.* Those who are born for the benefit of the human race go but little into it : those who are born for its curse are crowded.

*Plato.* It was requisite to dispel the mists of ignorance and error.

*Diogenes.* Has he done it ? What doubt has he elucidated, or what fact has he established ? Although I was

but twelve years old and resident in another city when he died, I have taken some pains in my inquiries about him from persons of less vanity and less perverseness than his disciples. He did not leave behind him any true philosopher among them; any who followed his mode of argumentation, his subjects of disquisition, or his course of life; any who would subdue the malignant passions or coerce the looser; any who would abstain from calumny or from cavil; any who would devote his days to the glory of his country, or, what is easier and perhaps wiser, to his own well-founded contentment and well-merited repose. Xenophon, the best of them, offered up sacrifices, believed in oracles, consulted soothsayers, turned pale at a jay, and was dysenteric at a magpie.

*Plato.* He had courage at least.

*Diogenes.* His courage was of so strange a quality, that he was ready, if jay or magpie did not cross him, to fight for Spartan or Persian. Plato, whom thou esteemest much more, and knowest somewhat less, careth as little for portent and omen as doth Diogenes. What he would have done for a Persian I cannot say; certain I am that he would have no more fought for a Spartan than he would for his own father: yet he mortally hates the man who hath a kinder muse or a better milliner, or a seat nearer the minion of a king. So much for the two disciples of Socrates who have acquired the greatest celebrity!

*Plato.* Diogenes! if you must argue or discourse with me, I will endure your asperity for the sake of your acuteness; but it appears to me a more philosophical thing to avoid what is insulting and vexatious, than to breast and brave it.

*Diogenes.* Thou hast spoken well.

*Plato.* It belongs to the vulgar, not to us, to fly from a man's opinions to his actions, and to stab him in his own house for having received no wound in the school. One merit you will allow me : I always keep my temper ; which you seldom do.

*Diogenes.* Is mine a good or a bad one ?

*Plato.* Now, must I speak sincerely ?

*Diogenes.* Dost thou, a philosopher, ask such a question of me, a philosopher ? Ay, sincerely or not at all.

*Plato.* Sincerely as you could wish, I must declare, then, your temper is the worst in the world.

*Diogenes.* I am much in the right, therefore, not to keep it. Embrace me : I have spoken now in thy own manner. Because thou sayest the most malicious things the most placidly, thou thinkest or pretendest thou art sincere.

*Plato.* Certainly those who are most the masters of their resentments are likely to speak less erroneously than the passionate and morose.

*Diogenes.* If they would, they might ; but the moderate are not usually the most sincere, for the same circumspection which makes them moderate makes them likewise retentive of what could give offence : they are also timid in regard to fortune and favour, and hazard little. There is no mass of sincerity in any place. What there is must be picked up patiently, a grain or two at a time ; and the season for it is after a storm, after the overflowing of banks, and bursting of mounds, and sweeping away of landmarks. Men will always hold something back ; they must be shaken and loosened a little, to make them let go what is deepest in them, and weightiest and purest.

*Plato.* Shaking and loosening as much about you as was requisite for the occasion, it became you to demonstrate where and in what manner I had made Socrates appear less



sagacious and less eloquent than he was; it became you likewise to consider the great difficulty of finding new thoughts and new expressions for those who had more of them than any other men, and to represent them in all the brilliancy of their wit and in all the majesty of their genius. I do not assert that I have done it; but if I have not, what man has? what man has come so nigh to it? He who could bring Socrates, or Solon, or Diogenes through a dialogue, without disparagement, is much nearer in his intellectual powers to them, than any other is near to him.

*Diogenes.* Let Diogenes alone, and Socrates, and Solon. None of the three ever occupied his hours in tingeing and curling the tarnished plumes of prostitute Philosophy, or deemed anything worth his attention, care, or notice, that did not make men brave and independent. As thou callest on me to show thee where and in what manner thou hast misrepresented thy teacher, and as thou seemest to set an equal value on eloquence and on reasoning, I shall attend to thee awhile on each of these matters, first inquiring of thee whether the axiom is Socratic, that it is never becoming to get drunk, *unless* in the solemnities of Bacchus?

*Plato.* This god was the discoverer of the vine and of its uses.

*Diogenes.* Is drunkenness one of its uses, or the discovery of a god? If Pallas or Jupiter hath given us reason, we should sacrifice our reason with more propriety to Jupiter or Pallas. To Bacchus is due a libation of wine; the same being his gift, as thou preachest.

Another and a graver question.

Did Socrates teach thee that "slaves are to be scourged, and by no means admonished as though they were the children of the master?"

*Plato.* He did not argue upon government.



*Diogenes.* He argued upon humanity, whereon all government is founded : whatever is beside it is usurpation.

*Plato.* Are slaves then never to be scourged, whatever be their transgressions and enormities ?

*Diogenes.* Whatever they be, they are less than his who reduced them to their condition.

*Plato.* What ! though they murder his whole family ?

*Diogenes.* Ay, and poison the public fountain of the city.

What am I saying ? and to whom ? Horrible as is this crime, and next in atrocity to parricide, thou deemest it a lighter one than stealing a fig or grape. The stealer of these is scourged by thee ; the sentence on the poisoner is to cleanse out the receptacle. There is, however, a kind of poisoning which, to do thee justice, comes before thee with all its horrors, and which thou wouldst punish capitally, even in such a sacred personage as an aruspex or diviner : I mean the poisoning by incantation. I, and my whole family, my whole race, my whole city, may bite the dust in agony from a truss of henbane in the well ; and little harm done forsooth ! Let an idle fool set an image of me in wax before the fire, and whistle and caper to it, and purr and pray, and chant a hymn to Hecate while it melts, entreating and imploring her that I may melt as easily,—and thou wouldst, in thy equity and holiness, strangle him at the first stave of his psalmody.

*Plato.* If this is an absurdity, can you find another ?

*Diogenes.* Truly, in reading thy book, I doubted at first, and for a long continuance, whether thou couldst have been serious ; and whether it were not rather a satire on those busy-bodies who are incessantly intermeddling in other people's affairs. It was only on the protestation of thy intimate friends that I believed thee to have written it in

earnest. As for thy question, it is idle to stoop and pick out absurdities from a mass of inconsistency and injustice; but another and another I could throw in, and another and another afterward, from any page in the volume. Two bare, staring falsehoods lift their beaks one upon the other, like spring frogs. Thou sayest that no punishment decreed by the laws tendeth to evil. What! not if immoderate? not if partial? Why then repeal any penal statute while the subject of its animadversion exists? In prisons the less criminal are placed among the more criminal, the inexperienced in vice together with the hardened in it. This is part of the punishment, though it precedes the sentence; nay, it is often inflicted on those whom the judges acquit: the law, by allowing it, does it.

The next is, that he who is punished by the laws is the better for it, however the less depraved. What! if anteriorly to the sentence he lives and converses with worse men, some of whom console him by deadening the sense of shame, others by removing the apprehension of punishment? Many laws as certainly make men bad, as bad men make many laws; yet under thy regimen they take us from the bosom of the nurse, turn the meat about upon the platter, pull the bed-clothes off, make us sleep when we would wake, and wake when we would sleep, and never cease to rummage and twitch us, until they see us safe landed at the grave. We can do nothing (but be poisoned) with impunity. What is worst of all, we must marry certain relatives and connections, be they distorted, blear-eyed, toothless, carbuncled, with hair (if any) eclipsing the reddest torch of Hymen, and with a hide outrivalling in colour and plaits his trimmest saffron robe. At the mention of this indeed, friend Plato, even thou, although resolved to stand out of harm's way, beginnest to make a

wry mouth, and findest it difficult to pucker and purse it up again, without an astringent store of moral sentences. Hymen is truly no acquaintance of thine. We know the delicacies of love which thou wouldst reserve for the gluttony of heroes and the fastidiousness of philosophers. Heroes, like gods, must have their own way; but against thee and thy confraternity of elders I would turn the closet-key, and your mouths might water over, but your tongues should never enter those little pots of comfiture. Seriously, you who wear embroidered slippers ought to be very cautious of treading in the mire. Philosophers should not only live the simplest lives, but should also use the plainest language. Poets, in employing magnificent and sonorous words, teach philosophy the better by thus disarming suspicion that the finest poetry contains and conveys the finest philosophy. You will never let any man hold his right station: you would rank Solon with Homer for poetry. This is absurd. The only resemblance is in both being eminently wise. Pindar, too, makes even the cadences of his dithyrambics keep time to the flute of Reason. My tub, which holds fifty-fold thy wisdom, would crack at the reverberation of thy voice.

*Plato.* Farewell.

*Diogenes.* I mean that every one of thy whimsies hath been picked up somewhere by thee in thy travels; and each of them hath been rendered more weak and puny by its place of concealment in thy closet. What thou hast written on the immortality of the soul goes rather to prove the immortality of the body; and applies as well to the body of a weasel or an eel as to the fairer one of Agathon or of Aster. Why not at once introduce a new religion, since religions keep and are relished in proportion as they are

salted with absurdity, inside and out ? and all of them must have one great crystal of it for the centre ; but Philosophy pines and dies unless she drinks limpid water. When Pherecydes and Pythagoras felt in themselves the majesty of contemplation, they spurned the idea that flesh and bones and arteries should confer it ; and that what comprehends the past and the future should sink in a moment and be annihilated for ever. "No," cried they, "the power of thinking is no more in the brain than in the hair, although the brain may be the instrument on which it plays. It is not corporeal, it is not of this world ; its existence is eternity, its residence is infinity." I forbear to discuss the rationality of their belief, and pass on straight-way to thine ; if, indeed, I am to consider as one, belief and doctrine.

*Plato.* As you will.

*Diogenes.* I should rather, then, regard these things as mere ornaments ; just as many decorate their apartments with lyres and harps, which they themselves look at from the couch, supinely complacent, and leave for visitors to admire and play on.

*Plato.* I foresee not how you can disprove my argument on the immortality of the soul, which, being contained in the best of my dialogues, and being often asked for among my friends, I carry with me.

*Diogenes.* At this time ?

*Plato.* Even so.

*Diogenes.* Give me then a certain part of it for my perusal.

*Plato.* Willingly.

*Diogenes.* Hermes and Pallas ! I wanted but a cubit of it, or at most a fathom, and thou art pulling it out by the plethron.

*Plato.* This is the place in question.

*Diogenes.* Read it.

*Plato* (reads). "Sayest thou not that death is the opposite of life, and that they spring the one from the other?" "Yes." "What springs then from the living?" "*The dead.*" "And what from the dead?" "*The living.*" "Then all things alive spring from the dead."

*Diogenes.* Why thy repetition? but go on.

*Plato* (reads). "Souls therefore exist after death in the infernal regions."

*Diogenes.* Where is the *therefore*? where is it even as to *existence*? As to the *infernal regions*, there is nothing that points toward a proof, or promises an indication. Death neither springs from life, nor life from death. Although death is the inevitable consequence of life, if the observation and experience of ages go for anything, yet nothing shows us, or ever hath signified, that life comes from death. Thou mightest as well say that a barley-corn dies before the germ of another barley-corn grows up from it, than which nothing is more untrue; for it is only the protecting part of the germ that perishes, when its protection is no longer necessary. The consequence, that souls exist after death, cannot be drawn from the corruption of the body, even if it were demonstrable that out of this corruption a live one could rise up. Thou hast not said that the soul is among those dead things which living things must spring from; thou hast not said that a living soul produces a dead soul, or that a dead soul produces a living one.

*Plato.* No, indeed.

*Diogenes.* On my faith, thou hast said, however, things no less inconsiderate, no less inconsequent, no less unwise; and this very thing must be said and proved, to make thy argument of any value. Do dead men beget children?



*Plato.* I have not said it.

*Diogenes.* Thy argument implies it.

*Plato.* These are high mysteries, and to be approached with reverence.

*Diogenes.* Whatever we cannot account for is in the same predicament. We may be gainers by being ignorant if we can be thought mysterious. It is better to shake our heads and to let nothing out of them, than to be plain and explicit in matters of difficulty. I do not mean in confessing our ignorance or our imperfect knowledge of them, but in clearing them up perspicuously : for, if we answer with ease, we may haply be thought good-natured, quick, communicative ; never deep, never sagacious ; not very defective possibly in our intellectual faculties, yet unequal and chinky, and liable to the probation of every clown's knuckle.

*Plato.* The brightest of stars appear the most unsteady and tremulous in their light ; not from any quality inherent in themselves, but from the vapours that float below, and from the imperfection of vision in the surveyor.

*Diogenes.* Draw thy robe round thee ; let the folds fall gracefully, and look majestic. That sentence is an admirable one ; but not for me. I want sense, not stars. What then ? Do no vapours float below the others ? and is there no imperfection in the vision of those who look at *them*, if they are the same men, and look the next moment ? We must move on : I shall follow the dead bodies, and the benighted driver of their fantastic bier, close and keen as any hyena.

*Plato.* Certainly, O Diogenes, you excel me in elucidations and similes : mine was less obvious.

*Diogenes.* I know the respect thou bearest to the dogly character, and can attribute to nothing else the complacency



with which thou hast listened to me since I released thy cloak. If ever the Athenians, in their inconstancy, should issue a decree to deprive me of the appellation they have conferred on me, rise up, I pray thee, in my defence, and protest that I have not merited so severe a mulct. Something I do deserve at thy hands ; having supplied thee, first with a store of patience, when thou wert going without any about thee, although it is the readiest viaticum and the heartiest sustenance of human life ; and then with weapons from this tub, wherewith to drive the importunate cock before thee out of doors again.

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## BARROW AND NEWTON.

*Newton.* I come, sir, before you with fear and trembling, at the thoughts of my examination to-morrow. If the masters are too hard upon me, I shall never take my degree. How I passed as bachelor I cannot tell : it must surely have been by especial indulgence.

*Barrow.* My dear Isaac ! do not be dispirited. The less intelligent of the examiners will break their beaks against the gravel, in trying to cure the indigestions and heart-burnings your plenteousness has given them ; the more intelligent know your industry, your abilities, and your modesty : they would favour you, if there were need of favour, but you, without compliment, surpass them all.

*Newton.* Oh, sir ! forbear, forbear ! I fear I may have forgotten a good deal of what you taught me.

*Barrow.* I wonder at that. I am older than you by many years ; I have many occupations and distractions ;

my memory is by nature less retentive : and yet I have not forgotten anything *you* taught *me*.

*Newton.* Too partial tutor, too benevolent friend ! this unmerited praise confounds me. I cannot calculate the powers of my mind, otherwise than by calculating the time I require to compass anything.

*Barrow.* Quickness is among the least of the mind's properties, and belongs to her in almost her lowest state : nay, it doth not abandon her when she is driven from her home, when she is wandering and insane. The mad often retain it ; the liar has it, the cheat has it ; we find it on the race-course and at the card-table : education does not give it, and reflection takes away from it.

*Newton.* I am slow ; and there are many parts of ordinary learning yet unattained by me.

*Barrow.* I had an uncle, a sportsman, who said that the light dog beats over most ground, but the heavier finds the covey.

*Newton.* Oftentimes indeed have I submitted to you problems and possibilities——

*Barrow.* And I have made you prove them.

*Newton.* You were contented with me ; all may not be.

*Barrow.* All will not be : many would be more so if you could prove nothing. Men, like dogs and cats, fawn upon you while you leave them on the ground ; if you lift them up they bite and scratch ; and if you show them their own features in the glass, they would fly at your throat and tear your eyes out. This between ourselves ; for we must not indulge in unfavourable views of mankind, since by doing it we make bad men believe that they are no worse than others, and we teach the good that they are good in vain. Philosophers have taken this side of the question to show their ingenuity ; but sound philosophers are not ingenious.

If philosophy can render us no better and no happier, away with it ! There are things that can ; and let us take them.

What dost thou sigh at, Isaac ?

*Newton.* At my ignorance, in some degree, of their writings.

*Barrow.* At your ignorance of the ignorant ? No man ever understood the things that are most admired in Plato and Aristoteles. In Plato there are incoherencies that fall to pieces at a touch ; and Aristoteles lost himself in the involutions of his own web. What must we think of a philosopher, who promised to teach one pupil that which he withheld from the rest, although these were more familiar with him, and more instructed ? And what must we think of a pupil, who was indignant that any others should partake in his sentiments and his knowledge ? Yet such men have guided the scientific, such men have ruled the world.

*Newton.* Not such was Bacon.

*Barrow.* No, indeed. I told you, and I repeat it, I think the small volume of *Essays* in your hand contains more wisdom and more genius than we can find in all the philosophers of antiquity ; with one exception, Cicero. On which I desired you to peruse it attentively, and to render me an account of it according to your opinion.

*Newton.* Sir, I have been induced to believe, but rather from the authority of my elders than from my own investigation, that Bacon is the more profound of the two, although not the more eloquent.

*Barrow.* If Bacon had written as easily and harmoniously as Cicero, he would have lost a portion of his weight with the generality of the learned, who are apt to conceive that in easy movement there is a want of solidity and strength. We must confess that antiquity has darkened

colleges and has distorted criticism. Very wise men, and very wary and inquisitive, walk over the earth, and are ignorant not only what minerals lie beneath, but what herbs and foliage they are treading. Some time afterward, and probably some distant time, a specimen of ore is extracted and exhibited; then another; lastly the bearing and diameter of the vein are observed and measured. Thus it is with writers who are to have a currency through ages. In the beginning they are confounded with most others; soon they fall into some secondary class; next, into one rather less obscure and humble; by degrees they are liberated from the dross and lumber that hamper them; and, being once above the heads of contemporaries, rise slowly and waveringly, then regularly and erectly, then rapidly and majestically, till the vision strains and aches as it pursues them in their ethereal elevation.

Neither you nor I have wasted our time in the cultivation of poetry: but each of us hath frequently heard it discoursed on by those who have; and, if it serves for nothing else, it serves for an illustration. In my early days, he would have been scoffed out of countenance who should have compared the *Lycidas*, or the *Allegro* and *Penseroso*, of Mr. John Milton to the sterling poetry (as it was called) of Dr. John Donne: and yet much may be said in favour of the younger; and there are those, and not only undergraduates, but bachelors and masters, who venture even to prefer him openly. Who knows but we may see him extolled to the level of Lucan and Statius, strong as is the sense of the University against all sorts of supplanters! There are eyes that cannot see print when near them; there are men that cannot see merit.

*Newton.* The Latin secretary may be pardoned for many defects in his poetry, and even for many in his

politics, in consideration of the reverence he bore toward the *Apocalypse*. I cannot think him a very irreligious man, although he does not attend divine service, we are told, so regularly as we could have wished.

*Barrow.* Let us talk no more about him. I opposed his principles: nevertheless he may have acted conscientiously; and even his principles are now coming again into fashion, and among the sons of those very cavaliers who would have hanged him. Perhaps the most dangerous of his doctrines, the lawfulness of setting aside God's anointed for misconduct, may soon be the leading one in the front of our Constitution. Well! we are not met for politics: only it would be salutary to consider, if God's anointed will not be set aside, what must be done—how avoid the commission of a diabolical act.

*Newton.* Could we rightly understand the *Revelation*, I question not but every difficulty of this nature would be solved.

*Barrow.* May be: let us trust in God.

*Newton.* We must have certain *data* for everything upon which we reason: the greater part of reasoners begin without them.

*Barrow.* I wish the event may answer your expectations; that the *Apocalypse*, the *Argonautic Expedition*, and the *Siege of Troy*, form the trident which is to push away our difficulties in navigating through all the rocks and shoals of time—all those of religion, and all those of history. Happen what may, I doubt nothing of your surpassing the foremost of your competitors—of your very soon obtaining a name in the University little below Doctor Spry's of Caius, Doctor Brockhouse's of St. John's, Doctor Cockburn's of Emanuel, Doctor Turnbull's of Peter House, or Doctor Cruikshank's of Bennet; nay, a name which, within a few



years, may reach even to Leyden and Paris, as that of a most studious young man, distinguished alike for application and invention.

*Newton.* Although I could not in conscience disclaim the small merit there may be in application, since I owe it to the encouragement of my tutor, I surely have no right or title to invention.

*Barrow.* You have already given proofs of it beyond any man I know. Your questions lead to great discoveries; whether it please God that you hereafter make them, or some one following you, is yet uncertain. We are silly enough to believe that the quality of invention, as applied to literature, lies in poetry and romance, mostly or altogether. I dare to speculate on discoveries in the subjects of your studies, every one far greater, every one far more wonderful, than all that lie within the range of fiction. In our days, the historian is the only inventor; and it is ludicrous to see how busily and lustily he beats about, with his string and muzzle upon him. I wish we could drag him for a moment into philosophical life: it would be still more amusing to look at him, as he runs over this loftier and dryer ground, throwing up his nose and whimpering at the prickles he must pass through.

Few men are contented with what is strictly true concerning the occurrences of the world: it neither heats nor soothes. The body itself, when it is in perfect health, is averse to a state of rest. We wish our prejudices to be supported, our animosities to be increased; as those who are inflamed by liquor would add materials to the inflammation.

*Newton.* The simple verities, important perhaps in their consequences, which I am exploring, not only abstract me from the daily business of society, but exempt me from the



hatred and persecution to which every other kind of study is exposed. In poetry, a good pastoral would raise against one as vehement enemies as a good satire. A great poet in our country, like the great giant in Sicily, can never move without shaking the whole island ; while the mathematician and astronomer may pursue their occupations, and rarely be hissed or pelted from below. You spoke of historians : it would ill become a person of my small experience to discourse on them after you.

*Barrow.* Let me hear, however, what you have to say, since at least it will be dispassionate.

*Newton.* Those who now write history do certainly write it to gratify a party, and to obtain notoriety and money. The materials lie in the cabinet of the statesman, whose actions and their consequences are to be recorded. If you censure them, you are called ungrateful for the facilities he has afforded you ; and, if you commend them, venal. No man, both judicious and honest, will subject himself to either imputation.

*Barrow.* Not only at the present day, but always, the indulgence of animosity, the love of gain, and the desire of favour have been the inducements of an author to publish in his lifetime the history of his contemporaries. But there have been, and let us hope there may be, judicious and virtuous men, so inflamed by the glory of their country in their days, that, leaving all passions and prejudices, they follow this sole guide, and are crowned by universal consent for commemorating her recent exploits.

*Newton.* Here are reasons enough for me rather to apply my mind as you direct it, than to the examination of facts which never can be collected by one person ; or to poetry, for which I have no call ; or to the composition of essays, such as those of Montaigne and Bacon ; or dialogues,

such as those of Cicero and Plato, and, nearer our times, of Erasmus and Galileo. You had furnished me before with arguments in abundance, convincing me that, even if I could write as well as they did, the reward of my labours would be dilatory and posthumous.

*Barrow.* I should entertain a mean opinion of myself, if all men or the most part praised and admired me: it would prove me to be somewhat like them. Sad and sorrowful is it to stand near enough to people for them to see us wholly; for them to come up to us and walk round us leisurely and idly, and pat us when they are tired and going off. That lesson which a dunce can learn at a glance, and likes mightily, must contain little, and not good. Unless it can be proved that the majority are not dunces—are not wilful, presumptuous, and precipitate—it is a folly to care for popularity. There are indeed those who must found their fortunes upon it: but not with books in their hands. After the first start, after a stand among the booths and gauds and prostitutes of party, how few have lived contentedly, or died calmly! One hath fallen the moment when he had reached the last step of the ladder, having undersawed it for him who went before, and forgotten that knavish act; another hath wasted away more slowly, in the fever of a life externally sedentary, internally distracted; a third, unable to fulfil the treason he had stipulated, and haunted by the terrors of detection, snaps the thread under the shears of the Fates, and makes even those who frequented him believe in Providence.

Isaac! Isaac! the climbing plants are slender ones. Men of genius have sometimes been forced away from the service of society into the service of princes; but they have soon been driven out, or have retired. When shall we see again, in the administration of any country, so accomplished

a creature as Wentworth, the favourite of Charles? Only light men recover false steps; his greatness crushed him. Aptitude for serving princes is no proof or signification of genius, nor indeed of any elevated or extensive knowledge. The interests of many require a multiplicity of talents to comprehend and accomplish them. Mazarin and Richelieu were as little able as they were little disposed to promote the well-being of the community; both of them had keen eyes, and kept them on one object—aggrandisement. We find the most trivial men in the streets pursuing an object through as many intricacies, and attaining it; and the schemes of children, though sooner dropped, are frequently as ingenious and judicious. No person can see more clearly than you do the mortifications to which the ambitious are subject; but some may fall into the snares of ambition whose nature was ever averse to it, and whose wisdom would almost reach anything, and only seems too lofty to serve them watchfully as a guard. It may thus happen to such as have been accustomed to study and retirement, and fall unexpectedly on the political world by means of recommendations. There are those, I doubt not, who would gladly raise their name and authority in the State by pushing you forward, as the phrase is, into Parliament. They seize any young man who has gained some credit at college, no matter for what, whether for writing an epigram or construing a passage in Lycophron; and, if he succeeds to power, they and their family divide the patronage. The ambitious heart is liable to burst in the emptiness of its elevation: let yours, which is sounder, lie lower and quieter. Think how much greater is the glory you may acquire by opening new paths to science, than by widening old ones to corruption. I would not whisper a syllable in the ear of faction; but the words of

the intelligent, in certain times and on certain occasions, do not vary with parties and systems. The royalist and republican meet; the difference lies merely in the intent, the direction, and the application. Do not leave the wise for the unwise, the lofty for the low, the retirement of a college for the turbulence of a House of Commons. Rise, but let no man lift you: leave that to the little and to the weak. Think within yourself, I will not say how impure are the sources of election to our Parliament, but how inconsiderable a distinction is conferred on the representative, even where it is not an individual who nominates, or only a few who appoint him, but where several hundreds are the voters. For who are they, and who direct them?—the roughest bear-guard, the most ferocious bull-baiter, the most impudent lawyer, the tinker that sings loudest, and the parson that sits latest at the ale-house, hitting them all by turns with his tobacco-pipe, calling them all sad dogs, and swearing till he falls asleep he will hear no more filthy toasts. Show me the borough where such people as these are not the most efficient in returning a candidate to Parliament; and then tell me which of them is fit to be the associate—it would be too ludicrous to say the patron—of a Euclid or an Archimedes? My dear Newton! the best thing is to stand above the world; the next is to stand apart from it on any side. You *may* attain the first; in trying to attain it, you are certain of the second.

*Newton.* I am not likely to be noticed by the great, nor favoured by the popular. I have no time for visiting: I detest the strife of tongues; all noises discompose me.

*Barrow.* We will then lay aside the supposition. The haven of philosophy itself is not free at all seasons from its gusts and swells. Let me admonish you to confide your secrets to few: I mean the secrets of science. In every

great mind there are some : every deep inquirer hath discovered more than he thought it prudent to avow, as almost every shallow one throws out more than he hath well discovered. Among our learned friends, we may be fully and unreservedly philosophical ; in the company of others we must remember, first and chiefly, that discretion is a part of philosophy, and we must let out only some glimpses of the remainder.

*Newton.* Surely no harm can befall us from following a chain of demonstrations in geometry, or any branch of the mathematics.

*Barrow.* Let us hope there may be none ; nevertheless we cannot but recollect how lately Galileo was persecuted and imprisoned for his discoveries.

*Newton.* He lived under a popish government.

*Barrow.* My friend ! my friend ! all the most eminently scientific, all the most eminently brave and daring in the exercise of their intellects, live, and have ever lived, under a popish government. There are popes in all creeds, in all countries, in all ages. Political power is jealous of intellectual ; often lest it expose and mar its plans and projects, and oftener lest it attract an equal share of celebrity and distinction. Whenever the literary man is protected by the political, the incitement to it is the pride of patronage ; not the advancement of letters, nor the honour they confer on the cultivator or the country.

*Newton.* That is rational in England which beyond the Alps is monstrous. By God's blessing, I firmly believe in the *Holy Scriptures* ; yet, under your discretion and guidance, I would be informed if the sun's rays in Syria could ever be above the horizon for twenty-four hours, without a material alteration, without an utter derangement, of our whole mundane system ?



*Barrow.* Reserve that question for a future time and a wiser teacher. At present, I would only remark to you that our mundane system *has* been materially altered ; and that its alterations may have been attributed to other causes than the true, and laid down by different nations as having taken place at different epochs and on different occasions, sometimes to gratify their pride, sometimes to conceal their ignorance.

*Newton.* I am not quite satisfied.

*Barrow.* Those who are quite satisfied sit still and do nothing ; those who are not quite satisfied are the sole benefactors of the world.

*Newton.* And are driven out of it for their pains.

*Barrow.* Men seldom have loved their teachers.

*Newton.* How happens it, then, that you are loved so generally ; for who is there, capable of instruction, that you have not taught ? Never, since I have been at the University, have I heard of anyone being your enemy who was not a Calvinist—a sect wherein good-humoured and gracefully-minded men are scanty.

*Barrow.* Do not attribute the failing to the sect, which hath many strong texts of Scripture for its support ; but rather think that the doctrines are such as are most consentaneous to the malignant and morose. There are acrid plants that attract as many insects as the sweeter, but insects of another kind. All substances have their commodities, all opinions their partisans. I have been happy in my pupils ; but in none of them have I observed such a spirit of investigation as in you. Keep it, however, within the precincts of experimental and sure philosophy, which are spacious enough for the excursions of the most vigorous mind, and varied enough for the most inconstant and flighty. Never hate, never dislike men, for difference of religion.



Some receive baleful impressions in it more easily than others, as they do diseases. We do not hate a child for catching the small-pox, but pity its sores and blemishes. Let the Calvinist hate us : he represents his God as a hater, he represents him as capricious. I wish he would love us, even from caprice ; but he seems to consider this part of the Divine nature as a weakness.

Come, unroll your paper ; let me hear what you have to say on Bacon's *Essays*,—a volume I place in the hand of those only who appear to me destined to be great.

*Newton.* Bacon, seen only in his *Essays*, would have appeared to me (fresh as I come from the study of the ancients, and captivated as I confess I am by the graces of their language) the wisest and most instructive of writers.

*Barrow.* In calling him the wisest of writers, you must except those who wrote from inspiration.

*Newton.* Ha ! that is quite another thing.

*Barrow.* Henceforward I would advise you to follow the bent of your genius, in examining those matters principally which are susceptible of demonstration. Every young man should have some proposed end for his studies : let yours be philosophy ; and principally those parts of it in which the ancients have done little and the moderns less. And never be dejected, my dear Isaac, though it should enable you to throw but a scarcity of light on the *Revelation*, *The Rape of Helen*, and *The Golden Fleece*.

*Newton.* I hope by my labours I may find a clew to them in the process of time. But perhaps my conjectures may turn out wrong, as those on the book before me have.

*Barrow.* How ?

*Newton.* I should always have imagined, if you had not

taught me the contrary, that there is more of genius and philosophy in Bacon's *Essays* than in all Cicero's works, however less there be of the scholastic and oratorical. Perhaps I, by being no estimator of style——

*Barrow.* Peace, peace! my modest Newton! Perhaps I, by being too much an estimator of it, have overvalued the clearest head and the purest tongue of antiquity. My Lord Justice Coke, and probably the more learned Seldon, would have ridiculed or reproved us, had we dared entertain in their presence a doubt of Cicero's superiority over Bacon. No very great man ever reached the standard of his greatness in the crowd of his contemporaries. This hath always been reserved for the secondary. There must either be something of the vulgar, something in which the commonalty can recognise their own features, or there must be a laxity, a jealousy, an excitement stimulating a false appetite. Your brief review of the *Essays* hath brought back to my recollection so much of shrewd judgment, so much of rich imagery, such a profusion of truths so plain, as (without his manner of exhibiting them) to appear almost unimportant that, in the various high qualities of the human mind, I must acknowledge not only Cicero, but every prose-writer among the Greeks, to stand far below him. Cicero is least valued for his highest merits, his fulness, and his perspicuity. Bad judges (and how few are not so!) desire in composition the concise and the obscure, not knowing that the one most frequently arises from paucity of materials, and the other from inability to manage and dispose them. Have you never observed that, among the ignorant in painting, dark pictures are usually called the finest in the collection, and greybearded heads, fit only for the garret, are preferred to the radiance of light and beauty? Have you yourself never thought, before you

could well measure and calculate, that books and furniture thrown about a room appeared to be in much greater quantities than when they were arranged? At every step we take to gain the approbation of the wise, we lose something in the estimation of the vulgar. Look within: cannot we afford it?

The minds of few can take in the whole of a great author, and fewer can draw him close enough to another for just commensuration. A fine passage may strike us less forcibly than one beneath it in beauty, from less sensibility in us at the moment; whence less enthusiasm, less quickness of perception, less capacity, less hold. You have omitted to remark some of the noblest things in Bacon, often I believe because there is no power of judgment to be shown in the expression of admiration, and perhaps, too, sometimes from the repetition and intensity of delight.

*Newton.* Sir, I forbore to lift up my hands as a mark of admiration. You ordered me to demonstrate, if I could, the defects of this wonderful man, unnoticed hitherto.

*Barrow.* You have done it to my satisfaction. Cicero disdained not in the latter days of his life, when he was highest in reputation and dignity, to perform a similar office in regard to Epicurus: and I wish he had exhibited the same accuracy and attention, the same moderation and respect. The objections of your friend and visitor are not altogether frivolous; take care, however, lest he, by his disceptations, move you from your faith. If you hold the faith, the faith will support you; as, if you make your bed warm by lying in it, your bed will keep you so: never mind what the ticking or the wadding may be made of. There are few things against which I see need to warn you, and not many on which you want advice. You are not profuse in your expenditure; yet as you, like most of the studious,

are inattentive to money-affairs, let me guard you against evils following on this negligence, worse than the negligence itself. Whenever a young man is remarked for it, a higher price is fixed on what he purchases; and dishonest men of every description push themselves into his service, and often acquire his confidence, not only to the injury of his fortune, but likewise of his credit and respectability. Let a gentleman be known to have been cheated of twenty pounds, and it costs him forty a-year for the remainder of his life. Therefore, if you detect the cheat, the wisest thing is to conceal it; both for fear of the rogues about your sideboard, and of those more dexterous ones round the green cloth, under the judge, in your county assize-room.

You will become an author ere long; and every author must attend to the means of conveying his information. The plainness of your style is suitable to your manners and your studies. Avoid, which many grave men have not done, words taken from sacred subjects and from elevated poetry; these we have seen vilely prostituted. Avoid, too, the society of the barbarians who misemploy them: they are vain, irreverent, and irreclaimable to right feelings. The dialogues of Galileo, which you have been studying, are written with much propriety and precision. I do not urge you to write in dialogue, although the best writers of every age have done it; the best parts of Homer and Milton are speeches and replies; the best parts of every great historian are the same: the wisest men of Athens and of Rome converse together in this manner, as they are shown to us by Xenophon, by Plato, and by Cicero. Whether you adopt such a form of composition—which, if your opinions are new, will protect you in part from the hostility all novelty (unless it is vicious) excites—or whether you choose to go along the

unbroken surface of the didactic, never look abroad for any kind of ornament. Apollo, either as the god of day or the slayer of Python, had nothing about him to obscure his clearness or to impede his strength. To one of your mild manners, it would be superfluous to recommend equanimity in competition, and calmness in controversy. How easy is it for the plainest things to be misinterpreted by men not unwise, which a calm disquisition sets right!—and how fortunate and opportune is it to find in ourselves that calmness which almost the wisest have wanted, on urgent and grave occasions! If others for a time are preferred to you, let your heart lie sacredly still; and you will hear from it the true and plain oracle, that not for ever will the magistracy of letters allow the rancid transparencies of coarse colourmen to stand before your propylæa. It is time that Philosophy should have her share in our literature; that the combinations and appearances of matter be scientifically considered and luminously displayed. Frigid conceits on theological questions, heaps of snow on barren crags, compose at present the greater part of our domain: volcanoes of politics burst forth from time to time, and vary, without enlivening, the scene.

Do not fear to be less rich in the productions of your mind at one season than at another. Marshes are always marshes, and pools are pools; but the sea, in those places where we admire it most, is sometimes sea and sometimes dry land; sometimes it brings ships into port, and sometimes it leaves them where they can be refitted and equipped. The capacious mind neither rises nor sinks, neither labours nor rests, in vain. Even in those intervals when it loses the consciousness of its powers, when it swims as it were in vacuity, and feels not what is external nor internal, it acquires or recovers strength, as the body does



by sleep. Never try to say things admirably ; try only to say them plainly ; for your business is with the considerate philosopher, and not with the polemical assembly. If a thing can be demonstrated two ways, demonstrate it in both : one will please this man best, the other that ; and pleasure, if obvious and unsought, is never to be neglected by those appointed from above to lead us into knowledge. Many will readily mount stiles and gates to walk along a footpath in a field, whom the very sight of a bare public road would disincline and weary ; and yet the place whereto they travel lies at the end of each. Your studies are of a nature unsusceptible of much decoration : otherwise it would be my duty and my care to warn you against it, not merely as idle and unnecessary, but as obstructing your intent. The fond of wine are little fond of the sweet or of the new : the fond of learning are no fonder of its must than of its dregs. Something of the severe hath always been appertaining to order and to grace ; and the beauty that is not too liberal is sought the most ardently and loved the longest. The Graces have their zones, and Venus her cestus. In the writings of the philosopher are the frivolities of ornament the most ill-placed ; in you would they be particularly, who, promising to lay open before us an infinity of worlds, should turn aside to display the petals of a double pink.

It is dangerous to have any intercourse or dealing with small authors. They are as troublesome to handle, as easy to discompose, as difficult to pacify, and leave as unpleasant marks on you, as small children. Cultivate on the other hand the society and friendship of the higher ; first, that you may learn to reverence them, which of itself is both a pleasure and a virtue ; and then, that on proper occasions you may defend them against the malevolent, which is a



duty. And this duty cannot be well and satisfactorily performed with an imperfect knowledge, or with an inadequate esteem. Habits of respect to our superiors are among the best we can attain, if we only remove from our bosom the importunate desire of unworthy advantages from them. They belong to the higher department of justice, and will procure for us in due time our portion of it. Beside, O Isaac! in this affair our humanity is deeply concerned. Think how gratifying, how consolatory, how all-sufficient, are the regards and attentions of such wise and worthy men as you to those whom inferior but more powerful ones, some in scarlet, some in purple, some (it may be) in ermine, vilify or neglect! Many are there to whom we are now indifferent, or nearly, whom, if we had approached them as we ought to have done, we should have cherished, loved, and honoured. Let not this reflection, which on rude and unequal minds may fall without form and features and pass away like the idlest cloud-shadow, be lost on you. Old literary men, beside age and experience, have another quality in common with Nestor: they, in the literature of the country, are praisers of times past, partly from moroseness, and partly from custom and conviction. The illiterate, on the contrary, raise higher than the steeples, and dress up in the gaudiest trim, a maypole of their own, and dance round it while any rag flutters. So tenacious are Englishmen of their opinions, that they would rather lose their franchises and almost their lives. And this tenacity hath not its hold upon letters only, but likewise upon whatever is public. I have witnessed it in men guilty of ingratitude, of fraud, of speculation, of prevarication, of treachery to friends, of insolence to patrons, of misleading of colleagues, of abandonment of party, of renunciation of principles, of arrogance to honest men and wiser, of humiliation to strumpets for the obtainment of

place and profit, of every villainy in short which unfits not only for the honours of public, but rejects from the confidence of private life. And there have been people so maddened by faction, that they would almost have erected a monument to such persons, hoping to spite and irritate their adversaries, and unconscious or heedless that the inscription must be their own condemnation. Those who have acted in this manner will repent of it ; but they will hate you for ever if you foretell them of their repentance. It is not the fact nor the consequence, it is the motive, that turns and pinches them ; and they would think it straightforward and natural to cry out against you, and a violence and a malady to cry out against themselves. The praises they have given they will maintain, and more firmly than if they were due ; as perjurers stick to perjury more hotly than the veracious to truth. Supposing there should be any day of your life unoccupied by study, there will not be one without an argument why parties, literary or political, should be avoided. You are too great to be gregarious ; and were you to attempt it, the gregarious in a mass would turn their heads against you. The greater who enter into public life are disposed at last to quit it: *retirement with dignity* is their device ; the meaning of which is, retirement with as much of the public property as can be amassed and carried away. This race of great people is very numerous. I want before I die to see one or two ready to believe, and to act on the belief, that there is as much dignity in retiring soon as late, with little as with loads, with quiet minds and consciences as with ulcerated or discomposed. I have already seen some hundred sectaries of that pugnacious pope, who, being reminded that Christ commanded Peter to put up his sword, replied, "Yes, when he had cut the ear off."

To be in right harmony, the soul not only must be never

out of time, but must never lose sight of the theme its Creator's hand hath noted.

Why are you peeping over your forefinger into those pages near the beginning of the volume?

*Newton.* I have omitted the notice of several Essays.

*Barrow.* There are many that require no observation for peculiarities; though perhaps there is not one that any other man could have written.

*Newton.* I had something more, sir, to say—or rather—I had something more, sir, to ask—about Friendship.

*Barrow.* All men, but the studious above all, must beware in the formation of it. Advice or caution on this subject comes immaturely and ungracefully from the young, exhibiting a proof either of temerity or suspicion; but when you hear it from a man of my age, who has been singularly fortunate in the past, and foresees the same felicity in those springing up before him, you may accept it as the direction of a calm observer, telling you all he has remarked on the greater part of a road which he has nearly gone through, and which you have but just entered. Never take into your confidence, or admit often into your company, any man who does not know, on some important subject, more than you do. Be his rank, be his virtues, what they may, he will be a hindrance to your pursuits, and an obstruction to your greatness. If indeed the greatness were such as courts can bestow, and such as can be laid on the shoulders of a groom and make him look like the rest of the company, my advice would be misplaced; but since all transcendent, all true and genuine greatness must be of a man's own raising, and only on the foundation that the hand of God has laid, do not let any touch it: keep them off civilly, but keep them off. Affect no stoicism; display no indifference: let their coin pass current; but do not you exchange for it the purer ore

you carry, nor think the milling pays for the alloy. Greatly favoured and blessed by Providence will you be, if you should in your lifetime be known for what you are : the contrary, if you should be transformed.

*Newton.* Better and more decorous would it be, perhaps, if I filled up your pause with my reflections : but you always have permitted me to ask you questions ; and now, unless my gratitude misleads me, you invite it.

*Barrow.* Ask me anything : I will answer it, if I can ; and I will pardon you, as I have often done, if you puzzle me.

*Newton.* Is it not a difficult and a painful thing to repulse, or to receive ungraciously, the advances of friendship ?

*Barrow.* It withers the heart, if indeed his heart were ever sound who doth it. Love, serve, run into danger, venture life, for him who would cherish you : give him everything but your time and your glory. Morning recreations, convivial meals, evening walks, thoughts, questions, wishes, wants, partake with him. Yes, Isaac ! there are men born for friendship ; men to whom the cultivation of it is nature, is necessity, as the making of honey is to bees. Do not let them suffer for the sweets they would gather ; but do not think to live upon those sweets. Our corrupted state requires robuster food, or must grow more and more unsound.

*Newton.* I would yet say something ; a few words ; on this subject—or one next to it.

*Barrow.* *On Expense*, then : that is the next. I have given you some warning about it, and hardly know what else to say. Cannot you find the place ?

*Newton.* I had it under my hand. If—that is, provided—your time, sir !——

*Barrow.* Speak it out, man! Are you in a ship of Marcellus under the mirror of Archimedes, that you fume and redden so? Cry to him that you are his scholar, and went out only to parley.

*Newton.* Sir! in a word—ought a studious man to think of matrimony?

*Barrow.* Painters, poets, mathematicians, never ought: other studious men, after reflecting for twenty years upon it, may. Had I son of your age, I would not leave him in a grazing country. Many a man hath been safe among corn-fields, who falls a victim on the grass under an elm. There are lightnings very fatal in such places.

*Newton.* Supposing me no mathematician, I must reflect then for twenty years!

*Barrow.* Begin to reflect on it after the twenty; and continue to reflect on it all the remainder: I mean at intervals, and quite leisurely. It will save to you many prayers, and may suggest to you one thanksgiving.

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## SCIPIO, POLYBIUS, AND PANÆTIUS.

*Polybius.* I wish I could as easily make you smile to-day, O Æmilianus, as I shall our good-tempered and liberal Panætius—a philosopher, as we have experienced, less inclined to speak ill or ludicrously of others, be the sect what it may, than any I know or have heard of.

In my early days, one of a different kind, and whose alarms at luxury were (as we discovered) subdued in some



degree, in some places, was invited by Critolaus to dine with a party of us, all then young officers, on our march from Achaia into Elis. His florid and open countenance made his company very acceptable: and the more so, as we were informed by Critolaus that he never was importunate with his morality at dinner-time.

Philosophers, if they deserve the name, are by no means indifferent as to the places in which it is their intention to sow the seeds of virtue. They choose the ingenuous, the modest, the sensible, the obedient. We thought rather of where we should place our table. Behind us lay the forest of Pholœ, with its many glens opening to the plain; before us the Temple of Olympian Zeus, indistinctly discernible, leaned against the azure heavens; and the rivulet of Selinus ran a few stadions from us, seen only where it received a smaller streamlet, originating at a fountain close by.

The cistus, the pomegranate, the myrtle, the serpolet, bloomed over our heads and beside us; for we had chosen a platform where a projecting rock, formerly a stone-quarry, shaded us, and where a little rill, of which the spring was there, bedimmed our goblets with the purest water. The awnings we had brought with us to protect us from the sun were unnecessary for that purpose: we rolled them therefore into two long seats, filling them with moss, which grew profusely a few paces below. "When our guest arrives," said Critolaus, "every one of these flowers will serve him for some moral illustration; every shrub will be the rod of Mercury in his hands." We were impatient for the time of his coming. Thelymnia, the beloved of Critolaus, had been instructed by him in a stratagem, to subvert, or shake at least and stagger, the philosophy of Euthymedes. Has the name escaped me? no matter—perhaps he is dead

—if living, he would smile at a recoverable lapse as easily as we did.

Thelymnia wore a dress like ours, and acceded to every advice of Critolaus, excepting that she would not consent readily to entwine her head with ivy. At first she objected that there was not enough of it for all. Instantly two or three of us pulled down (for nothing is more brittle) a vast quantity from the rock, which loosened some stones, and brought down together with them a bird's nest of the last year. Then she said, "I dare not use this ivy; the omen is a bad one."

"Do you mean the nest, Thelymnia?" said Critolaus.

"No, not the nest so much as the stones," replied she, faltering.

"Ah! those signify the dogmas of Euthymedes, which you, my lovely Thelymnia, are to loosen and throw down."

At this she smiled faintly and briefly, and began to break off some of the more glossy leaves; and we who stood around her were ready to take them and place them in her hair; when suddenly she held them tighter, and let her hand drop. On her lover's asking her why she hesitated, she blushed deeply, and said, "Phoroneus told me I looked best in myrtle."

Innocent and simple and most sweet (I remember) was her voice; and, when she had spoken, the traces of it were remaining on her lips. Her beautiful throat itself changed colour; it seemed to undulate; and the roseate predominated in its pearly hue. Phoroneus had been her admirer: she gave the preference to Critolaus; yet the name of Phoroneus at that moment had greater effect upon him than the recollection of his defeat.

Thelymnia recovered herself sooner. We ran wherever

we saw myrtles, and there were many about, and she took a part of her coronal from every one of us, smiling on each ; but it was only of Critolaus that she asked if he thought that myrtle became her best. "Phoroneus," answered he, not without melancholy, "is infallible as Paris." There was something in the tint of the tender sprays resembling that of the hair they encircled : the blossoms, too, were white as her forehead. She reminded me of those ancient fables which represent the favourites of the gods as turning into plants ; so accordant and identified was her beauty with the flowers and foliage she had chosen to adorn it.

In the midst of our felicitations to her we heard the approach of horses, for the ground was dry and solid ; and Euthymedes was presently with us. The mounted slave who led off his master's charger, for such he appeared to be in all points, suddenly disappeared : I presume lest the sight of luxury should corrupt him. I know not where the groom rested, nor where the two animals (no neglected ones certainly, for they were plump and stately) found provender.

Euthymedes was of lofty stature, had somewhat passed the middle age ; but the Graces had not left his person, as they usually do when it begins to bear an impression of authority. He was placed by the side of Thelymnia. Gladness and expectation sparkled from every eye : the beauty of Thelymnia seemed to be a light sent from heaven for the festival—a light the pure radiance of which cheered and replenished the whole heart. Desire of her was chastened, I may rather say was removed, by the confidence of Critolaus in our friendship.

*Panætius.* Well said ! The story begins to please and interest me. Where love finds the soul he neglects the body, and only turns to it in his idleness as to an

after-thought. Its best allurements are but the nuts and figs of the divine repast.

*Polybius.* We exulted in the felicity of our friend, and wished for nothing which even he would not have granted. Happy was the man from whom the glancing eye of Thelymnia seemed to ask some advice, how she should act or answer: happy he who, offering her an apple in the midst of her discourse, fixed his keen survey upon the next, anxious to mark where she had touched it. For it was a calamity to doubt upon what streak or speck, while she was inattentive to the basket, she had placed her finger.

*Panætius.* I wish, Æmilianus, you would look rather more severely than you do—upon my life! I cannot—and put an end to these dithyrambics. The ivy runs about us, and may infuriate us.

*Scipio.* The dithyrambics, I do assure you, Panætius, are not of my composing. We are both in danger from the same thyrsus: we will parry it as well as we can, or bend our heads before it.

*Panætius.* Come, Polybius, we must follow you then, I see, or fly you.

*Polybius.* Would you rather hear the remainder another time?

*Panætius.* By Hercules! I have more curiosity than becomes me.

*Polybius.* No doubt, in the course of the conversation, Euthymedes had made the discovery we hoped to obviate. Never was his philosophy more amiable or more impressive. Pleasure was treated as a friend, not as a master; many things were found innocent that had long been doubtful: excesses alone were condemned. Thelymnia was enchanted by the frankness and liberality of her philosopher, although,

in addressing her, more purity on his part and more rigour were discernible. His delicacy was exquisite. When his eyes met hers, they did not retire with rapidity and confusion, but softly and complacently, and as though it were the proper time and season of reposing from the splendours they had encountered. Hers from the beginning were less governable: when she found that they were so, she contrived scheme after scheme for diverting them from the table, and entertaining his unobservedly.

The higher part of the quarry, which had protected us always from the western sun, was covered with birch and hazel; the lower with innumerable shrubs, principally the arbutus and myrtle. "Look at those goats above us," said Thelymnia. "What has tangled their hair so? they seem wet."

"They have been lying on the cistus in the plain," replied Euthymedes: "many of its broken flowers are sticking upon them yet, resisting all the efforts, as you see, of hoof and tongue."

"How beauteous," said she, "are the flexible and crimson branches of this arbutus," taking it in one hand and beating with it the back of the other. "It seems only to have come out of its crevice to pat my shoulder at dinner, and twitch my myrtle when my head leaned back. I wonder how it can grow in such a rock."

"The arbutus," answered he, "clings to the Earth with the most fondness where it finds her in the worst poverty, and covers her bewintered bosom with leaves, berries, and flowers. On the same branch is unripe fruit of the most vivid green; ripening, of the richest orange; ripened, of perfect scarlet. The maidens of Tyre could never give so brilliant and sweet a lustre to the fleeces of Miletus; nor did they ever string such even and graceful pearls as



the blossoms are, for the brides of Assyrian or Persian kings."

"And yet the myrtle is preferred to the arbutus," said Thelymnia, with some slight uneasiness.

"I know why," replied he: "may I tell it?" She bowed and smiled, perhaps not without the expectation of some compliment. He continued: "The myrtle has done what the arbutus comes too late for.

"The myrtle has covered with her starry crown the beloved of the reaper and vintager; the myrtle was around the head of many a maiden celebrated in song, when the breezes of autumn scattered the first leaves, and rustled among them on the ground; and when she cried timidly, Rise, rise! people are coming! here! there! many!"

Thelymnia said, "That now is not true. Where did you hear it?" and in a softer and lower voice, if I may trust Androcles, "O Euthymedes, do not believe it!"

Either he did not hear her, or dissembled it; and went on: "This deserves preference; this deserves immortality; this deserves a place in the Temple of Venus; in her hand in her hair, in her breast: Thelymnia herself wears it."

We laughed and applauded; she blushed and looked grave and sighed—for she had never heard any one, I imagine, talk so long at once. However it was, she sighed: I saw and heard her. Critolaus gave her some glances: she did not catch them. One of the party clapped his hands longer than the rest, whether in approbation or derision of this rhapsody delivered with glee and melody, and entreated the philosopher to indulge us with a few of his adventures.

"You deserve, young man," said Euthymedes gravely, "to have as few as I have had—you whose idle curiosity would thus intemperately reveal the most sacred mysteries. Poets and philosophers may reason on love, and dream

about it, but rarely do they possess the object ; and, whenever they do, that object is the invisible deity of a silent worshipper."

"Reason, then, or dream," replied the other, breathing an air of scorn to soothe the soreness of the reproof.

"When we reason on love," said Euthymedes, "we often talk as if we were dreaming : let me try whether the recital of my dream can make you think I talk as if I were reasoning. You may call it a dream, a vision, or what you will.

"I was in a place not very unlike this, my head lying back against a rock, where its crevices were tufted with soft and odoriferous herbs, and where vine leaves protected my face from the sun, and from the bees ; which, however, were less likely to molest me, being busy in their first hours of honey-making among the blossoms. Sleep soon fell upon me, for of all philosophers I am certainly the drowsiest, though perhaps there are many quite of equal ability in communicating the gift of drowsiness. Presently I saw three figures, two of which were beautiful ; very differently, but in the same degree : the other was much less so. The least of the three, at the first glance, I recognised to be Love ; although I saw no wings, nor arrows, nor quiver, nor torch, nor emblem of any kind designating his attributes. The next was not Venus, nor a grace, nor a nymph, nor goddess of whom in worship or meditation I had ever conceived an idea ; and yet my heart persuaded me she was a goddess, and from the manner in which she spoke to Love, and he again to her, I was convinced she must be. Quietly and unmovedly as she was standing, her figure, I perceived, was adapted to the perfection of activity. With all the succulence and suppleness of early youth, scarcely beyond puberty, it however gave me the idea, from its graceful and

easy languor, of its being possessed by a fondness for repose. Her eyes were large and serene, and of a quality to exhibit the intensity of thought, or even the habitude of reflection, but incapable of expressing the plenitude of joy ; and her countenance was tinged with so delicate a colour, that it appeared an effluence from an irradiated cloud passing over it in the heavens. The third figure—who sometimes stood in one place and sometimes in another, and of whose countenance I could only distinguish that it was pale, anxious, and mistrustful—interrupted her perpetually. I listened attentively and with curiosity to the conversation, and by degrees I caught the appellations they interchanged. The one I found was Hope—and I wondered I did not find it out sooner ; the other was Fear, which I should not have found out at all ; for she did not look terrible nor aghast, but more like Sorrow or Despondency. The first words I could collect of Hope were these, spoken very mildly, and rather with a look of appeal than of accusation : ‘ Too surely you have forgotten—for never was child more forgetful or more ungrateful—how many times I have carried you in my bosom, when even your mother drove you from her, and when you could find no other resting-place in heaven or earth.’

“ ‘ O unsteady, unruly Love ! ’ cried the pale goddess with much energy ; ‘ it has often been by my intervention that thy wavering authority was fixed. For this I have thrown alarm after alarm into the heedless breast that Hope had once beguiled, and that was growing insensible and torpid under her feebler influence. I do not upbraid thee ; and it never was my nature to caress thee ; but I claim from thee my portion of the human heart—mine, ever mine, abhorrent as it may be of me. Let Hope stand on one side of thy altars, but let my place be on the other ; or, I swear by all

the gods! not any altars shalt thou possess upon the globe.'

"She ceased—and Love trembled. He turned his eyes upon Hope, as if in his turn appealing to her. She said—'It must be so; it was so from the beginning of the world: only let me never lose you from my sight.' She clasped her hands upon her breast as she said it, and he looked on her with a smile, and was going up (I thought) to kiss her, when he was recalled, and stopped.

"'Where Love is, there will I be also,' said Fear; 'and even thou, O Hope! never shalt be beyond my power.'

"At these words I saw them both depart. I then looked toward Love: I did not see him go; but he was gone."

The narration being ended, there were some who remarked what very odd things dreams are; but Thelymnia looked almost as if she herself was dreaming; and Alcimus, who sat opposite, and fancied she was pondering on what the vision could mean, said it appeared to him a thing next to certainty, that it signified how love cannot exist without hope or without fear. Euthymedes nodded assent, and assured him that a soothsayer in great repute had given him the same interpretation. Upon which the younger friends of Alcimus immediately took the ivy from his forehead, and crowned him with laurel, as being worthy to serve Apollo. But they did it with so much noise and festivity, that, before the operation was completed, he began to suspect they were in jest. Thelymnia had listened to many stories in her lifetime, yet never had she heard one from any man before who had been favoured by the deities with a vision. Hope and Love, as her excited imagination represented them to her, seemed still to be with Euthymedes. She thought the tale would have been better without the mention of Fear; but perhaps this part was

only a dream, all the rest a really true vision. She had many things to ask him: she did not know when, nor exactly what, for she was afraid of putting too hard a question to him in the presence of so many, lest it might abash him if he could not answer it; but she wished to ask him something, anything. She soon did it, not without faltering, and was enchanted by the frankness and liberality of her philosopher.

"Did you ever love?" said she, smiling, though not inclined to smile, but doing it to conceal (as in her simplicity she thought it would) her blushes; and looking a little aside, at the only cloud in the heavens, which crossed the moon, as if adorning her for a festival, with a fillet of pale sapphire and interlucent gold.

"I thought I did," replied he, lowering his eyes that she might lower hers to rest upon him.

"Do, then, people ever doubt this?" she asked in wonder, looking full in his face with earnest curiosity.

"Alas!" said he softly, "until a few hours ago, until Thelymnia was placed beside me, until an ungenerous heart exposed the treasure, that should have dwelt within it, to the tarnish of a stranger, if that stranger had the baseness to employ the sophistry that was in part expected from him, never should I have known that I had not loved before. We may be uncertain if a vase or an image be of the richest metal, until the richest metal be set right against it. Thelymnia! if I thought it possible at any time hereafter, that you should love me as I love you, I would exert to the uttermost my humble powers of persuasion to avert it."

"Oh! there is no danger," said she, disconcerted; "I did not love anyone: I thought I did, just like you; but indeed, indeed, Euthymedes, I was equally in an error. Women have dropped into the grave from it, and have



declared to the last moment that they never loved : men have sworn they should die with desperation, and have lived merrily, and have dared to run into the peril fifty times. They have hard, cold hearts, incommunicative and distrustful."

"Have I, too, Thelymnia?" gently he expostulated.

"No, not you," said she; "you may believe I was not thinking of you when I was speaking. But the idea does really make me smile and almost laugh, that you should fear me, supposing it possible, if you could suppose any such thing. Love does not kill men, take my word for it."

He looked rather in sorrow than in doubt, and answered—"Unpropitious love may not kill us always, may not deprive us at once of what at their festivals the idle and inconsiderate call life; but, O Thelymnia! our lives are truly at an end when we are beloved no longer. Existence may be continued, or rather may be renewed, yet the agonies of death and the chilliness of the grave have been passed through; nor are there Elysian fields, nor the sports that delighted in former times, awaiting us—nor pleasant converse, nor walks with linked hands, nor intermitted songs, nor vengeful kisses for leaving them off abruptly, nor looks that shake us to assure us afterward, nor that bland inquietude, as gently tremulous as the expansion of buds into blossoms, which hurries us from repose to exercise and from exercise to repose."

"Oh! I have been very near loving!" sighed Thelymnia. "Where in the world can a philosopher have learned all this about it!"

The beauty of Thelymnia, her blushes, first at the deceit, afterward at the encouragement she received in her replies, and lastly from some other things which we could not penetrate, highly gratified Critolaus. Soon however (for

wine always brings back to us our last strong feeling) he thought again of Phoroneus, as young, as handsome, and once (is that the word ?) as dear to her. He saddened at the myrtle on the head of his beloved ; it threw shadows and gloom upon his soul : her smiles, her spirits, her wit, and, above all, her nods of approbation wounded him. He sighed when she covered her face with her hand ; when she disclosed it he sighed again. Every glance of pleasure, every turn of surprise, every movement of her body, pained and oppressed him. He cursed in his heart whoever it was who had stuffed that portion of the couch : there was so little moss, thought he, between Thelymnia and Euthy-medes. He might have seen Athos part them, and would have murmured still.

The rest of us were in admiration at the facility and grace with which Thelymnia sustained her part, and observing less Critolaus than we did in the commencement, when he acknowledged and enjoyed our transports, indifferently and contentedly saw him rise from the table and go away, thinking his departure a preconcerted section of the stratagem. He retired, as he told us afterward, into a grot. So totally was his mind abstracted from the entertainment, he left the table athirst, covered as it was with fruit and wine, and abundant as ran beside us the clearest and sweetest and most refreshing rill. He related to me that, at the extremity of the cavern, he applied his parched tongue to the dripping rock, shunning the light of day, the voice of friendship, so violent was his desire of solitude and concealment ; and he held his forehead and his palms against it when his lips had closed. We knew not and suspected not his feelings at the time, and rejoiced at the anticipation of the silly things a philosopher should have whispered, which Thelymnia in the morning of the festival

had promised us to detail the next day. Love is apt to get entangled and to trip and stumble when he puts on the garb of Friendship : it is too long and loose for him to walk in, although he sometimes finds it convenient for a covering. Euthymedes the philosopher made this discovery, to which perhaps others may lay equal claim.

After the lesson he had been giving her, which amused her in the dictation, she stood composed and thoughtful, and then said hesitatingly, "But would it be quite proper? would there be nothing of insincerity and falsehood in it, to my Critolaus?" He caught her up in his arms, and, as in his enthusiasm he had raised her head above his, he kissed her bosom. She reproved and pardoned him, making him first declare and protest he would never do the like again. "O soul of truth and delicacy!" cried he aloud; and Thelymnia, no doubt, trembled lest her lover should in a moment be forsworn; so imminent and inevitable seemed the repetition of his offence. But he observed on her eyelashes, what had arisen from his precipitation in our presence—

"A hesitating, long-suspended tear,  
Like that which hangs upon the vine fresh-pruned,  
Until the morning kisses it away."

The nymphs, who often drive men wild (they tell us), have led me astray : I must return with you to the grot. We gave every facility to the stratagem. One slipped away in one direction, another in another; but, at a certain distance, each was desirous of joining some comrade, and of laughing together; yet each reproved the laughter, even when far off, lest it should do harm, reserving it for the morrow. While they walked along, conversing, the words of Euthymedes fell on the ears of Thelymnia softly as

cistus-petals, fluttering and panting for a moment in the air, fall on the thirsty sand. She, in a voice that makes the brain dizzy as it plunges into the breast, replied to him—

“O Euthymedes ! you must have lived your whole lifetime in the hearts of women, to know them so thoroughly : I never knew mine before you taught me.”

Euthymedes now was silent, being one of the few wise men whom love ever made wiser. But, in his silence and abstraction, he took especial care to press the softer part of her arm against his heart, that she might be sensible of its quick pulsation ; and, as she rested her elbow within the curvature of his, the slenderest of her fingers solicited, first one, then another, of those beneath them, but timidly, briefly, inconclusively, and then clung around it pressingly for countenance and support. Panætius, you have seen the mountains on the left hand, eastward, when you are in Olympia, and perhaps the little stream that runs from the nearest of them into the Alpheus. Could you have seen them that evening ! the moon never shone so calmly, so brightly, upon Latmos, nor the torch of Love before her. And yet many of the stars were visible ; the most beautiful were among them ; and as Euthymedes taught Thelymnia their names, their radiance seemed more joyous, more effulgent, more beneficent. If you have ever walked forth into the wilds and open plains upon such moonlight nights, cautious as you are, I will venture to say, Panætius, you have often tripped, even though the stars were not your study. There was an arm to support or to catch Thelymnia : yet she seemed incorrigible. Euthymedes was patient : at last he did I know not what, which was followed by a reproof, and a wonder how he could have done so, and another how he could answer for it. He looked ingenuously

and apologetically, forgetting to correct his fault in the meanwhile. She listened to him attentively, pushing his hand away at intervals, yet less frequently and less resolutely in the course of his remonstrance, particularly when he complained to her that the finer and more delicate part of us, the eye, may wander at leisure over what is in its way; yet that its dependents in the corporeal system must not follow it; that they must hunger and faint in the service of a power so rich and absolute. "This being hard, unjust, and cruel," said he, "never can be the ordinance of the gods. Love alone feeds the famishing; Love alone places all things, both of matter and of mind, in perfect harmony: Love hath less to learn from Wisdom than Wisdom hath to learn from Love."

"Modest man!" said she to herself, "there is a great deal of truth in what he says, considering he is a philosopher." She then asked him, after a pause, why he had not spoken so in the conversation on love, which appeared to give animation, mirth, and wit to the dullest of the company, and even to make the wines of Chios, Crete, and Lesbos sparkle with fresh vivacity in their goblets.

"I who was placed by the fountain-head," replied he, "had no inclination to follow the shallow and slender stream, taking its course towards streets and lanes, and dipped into and muddled by unhallowed and uncleanly hands. After dinner such topics are usually introduced, when the objects that ought to inspire our juster sentiments are gone away. An indelicacy worse than Thracian! The purest gales of heaven, in the most perfect solitudes, should alone lift up the aspiration of our souls to the divinities all men worship."

"Sensible creature!" sighed Thelymnia in her bosom, "how rightly he does think!"



"Come, fairest of wanderers," whispered he, softly and persuasively, "such will I call you, though the stars hear me, and though the gods too in a night like this pursue their loves upon earth—the moon has no little pools filled with her light under the rock yonder ; she deceives us in the depth of these hollows, like the limpid sea. Beside, we are here among the pinks and sand-roses : do they never prick your ankles with their stems and thorns? Even their leaves at tñis late season are enough to hurt you."

"I think they do," replied she, and thanked him, with a tender, timid glance, for some fresh security his arm or hand had given her in escaping from them. "Oh, now we are quite out of them all! How cool is the saxifrage! how cool the ivy-leaves!"

"I fancy, my sweet scholar—or shall I rather say (for you have been so oftener) my sweet teacher—they are not ivy leaves : to me they appear to be periwinkles."

"I will gather some and see," said Thelymnia.

Periwinkles cover wide and deep hollows : of what are they incapable when the convolvulus is in league with them! She slipped from the arm of Euthymedes, and in an instant had disappeared. In an instant too he had followed.

*Panætius.* These are mad pranks, and always end ill. Moonlights! cannot we see them quietly from the tops of our houses, or from the plain pavement? Must we give challenges to mastiffs, make appointments with wolves, run after asps, and languish for stone-quarries? Unwary philosopher and simple girl! Were they found again?

*Polybius.* Yea, by Castor! and most unwillingly.

*Scipio.* I do not wonder. When the bones are broken, without the consolation of some great service rendered in such misfortune, and when beauty must become deformity,

I can well believe that they both would rather have perished.

*Polybius.* Amaranth on the couch of Jove and Hebe was never softer than the bed they fell on. Critolaus had advanced to the opening of the cavern: he had heard the exclamation of Thelymnia as she was falling—he forgave her—he ran to her for her forgiveness—he heard some low sounds—he smote his heart, else it had fainted in him—he stopped.

Euthymedes was raising up Thelymnia, forgetful (as was too apparent) of himself. “Traitor,” exclaimed the fiery Critolaus, “thy blood shall pay for this. Impostor! whose lesson this very day was, that luxury is the worst of poisons.”

“Critolaus,” answered he calmly, drawing his robe about him (for, falling in so rough a place, his vesture was a little disordered), “we will not talk of blood; but as for my lesson of to-day, I must defend it. In a few words, then, since I think we are none of us disposed for many, hemlock does not hurt goats, nor luxury philosophers.”

Thelymnia had risen more beautiful from her confusion; but her colour soon went away, and, if any slight trace of it were remaining on her cheeks, the modest moonlight and the severer stars would let none show itself. She looked as the statue of Pygmalion would have looked, had she been destined the hour after animation to return into her inanimate state. Offering no excuse, she was the worthier of pardon: but there is one hour in which pardon never entered the human breast, and that hour was this. Critolaus, who always had ridiculed the philosophers, now hated them from the bottom of his heart. Every sect was detestable to him—the Stoic, the Platonic, the Epicurean—all equally; but especially those hypocrites and impostors

in each, who, under the cloak of philosophy, come forward with stately figures, prepossessing countenances, and bland discourse.

*Panætius.* We do not desire to hear what such foolish men think of philosophers, true or false; but pray tell us how he acted on his own notable discovery: for I opine he was the unlikeliest of the three to grow quite calm on a sudden.

*Polybius.* He went away; not without fierce glances at the stars, reproaches to the gods themselves, and serious and sad reflections upon destiny. Being, however, a pious man by constitution and education, he thought he had spoken of the omens unadvisedly, and found other interpretations for the stones we had thrown down with the ivy. "And, ah!" said he, sighing, "the bird's nest of last year too! I now know what that is!"

*Panætius.* Polybius, I considered you too grave a man to report such idle stories. The manner is not yours: I rather think you have torn out a page or two from some love-feast (not generally known) of Plato.

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## DAVID HUME AND JOHN HOME.

*Hume.* We Scotchmen, sir, are somewhat proud of our families and relationships: this is, however, a nationality which perhaps I should not have detected in myself, if I had not been favoured with the flattering present of your tragedy. Our names, as often happens, are spelled differently; but I yielded with no reluctance to the persuasion that we are, and not very distantly, of the same stock.

*Home.* I hope, sir, our mountains will detain you among them some time, and I presume to promise you that you will find in Edinburgh a society as polished and literate as in Paris.

*Hume.* As literate I can easily believe, my cousin, and perhaps as polished, if you reason upon the ingredients of polish ; but there is certainly much more amenity and urbanity at Paris than anywhere else in the world, and people there are less likely to give and take offence. All topics may be discussed without arrogance and superciliousness : an atheist would see you worship a stool or light a candle at noon without a sneer at you ; and a bishop, if you were well-dressed and perfumed, would argue with you calmly and serenely, though you doubted the whole Athanasian creed.

*Home.* So much the worse : God forbid we should ever experience this lukewarmness in Scotland !

*Hume.* God, it appears, has forbidden it ; for which reason, to show my obedience and submission, I live as much as possible in France, where at present God has forbidden no such thing.

*Home.* Religion, my dear sir, can alone make men happy and keep them so.

*Hume.* Nothing is better calculated to make men happy than religion, if you will allow them to manage it according to their minds ; in which case the strong men hunt down others until they can fold them, entrap them, or noose them. Here, however, let the discussion terminate. Both of us have been in a cherry orchard, and have observed the advantage of the jacket, hat, and rattle.

*Home.* Our reformed religion does not authorise any line of conduct diverging from right reason : we are commanded by it to speak the truth to all men.

*Hume.* Are you likewise commanded to hear it from all men?

*Home.* Yes, let it only be proved to be truth.

*Hume.* I doubt the fact: on the contrary, you will not even let it be proved; you resist the attempt; you blockade the preliminaries. Religion, as you practise it in Scotland, in some cases is opposite to reason and subversive of happiness.

*Home.* In what instance?

*Hume.* If you had a brother whose wife was unfaithful to him without his suspicion; if he lived with her happily; if he had children by her; if others of which he was fond could be proved by you, and you only, not to be his—what would you do?

*Home.* Oh the strumpet! we have none such here.

*Hume.* Come now, if you had a brother, I was supposing, whose wife——

*Home.* Out upon her! should my brother cohabit with her? Should my nephews be defrauded of their patrimony by bastards?

*Hume.* You would then destroy his happiness and his children's; for, supposing that you preserved to them a scanty portion more of fortune (which you could not do), still the shame they would feel from their mother's infamy would much outweigh it.

*Home.* I do not see clearly that this is a question of religion.

*Hume.* All the momentous actions of religious men are referable to their religion, more or less nearly; all the social duties, and surely these are implicated here, are connected with it. Suppose, again, that you knew a brother



and sister, who, born in different countries, met at last, ignorant of their affinity, and married.

*Hume.* Poor, blind, sinful creatures! God be merciful to them!

*Hume.* I join you heartily in the prayer, and would only add to it, Man be merciful to them also! Imagine them to have lived together ten years, to have a numerous and happy family, to come and reside in your parish, and the attestation of their prior relationship to be made indubitable to you by some document which alone could establish and record it: what would you do?

*Hume.* I would snap asunder the chain that the devil had ensared them in, even if he stood before me; I would implore God to pardon them, and to survey with an eye of mercy their unoffending bairns.

*Hume.* And would not you be disposed to behold them with an eye of the same materials?

*Hume.* Could I leave them in mortal sin, and pray to the ensnarer of souls? No, I would rush between them as with a flaming sword; I would rescue them by God's help from perdition.

*Hume.* What misery and consternation would this rescue bring with it!

*Hume.* They would call upon the hills to cover them, to crush and extinguish their shame.

*Hume.* Those who had lived together in love and innocence and felicity? A word spoken to them by their pastor brings them into irremediable guilt and anguish. And you would do this?

*Hume.* The laws of God are above all other laws: his ways are inscrutable: thick darkness covers his throne.

*Hume.* My cousin, you who have written so elegant and

pathetic a tragedy, cannot but have read the best-contrived one in existence, the *Œdipus* of Sophocles.

*Home.* It has wrung my heart ; it has deluged my eyes with weeping.

*Hume.* Which would you rather do—cause and excite those sufferings, or assuage and quell them ?

*Home.* Am I a Scotchman or an islander of the Red Sea, that a question like this should be asked me ?

*Hume.* You would not, then, have given to *Œdipus* that information which drove him and *Jocasta* to despair ?

*Home.* As a Christian and a minister of the gospel, I am commanded to defy the devil, and to burst asunder the bonds of sin.

*Hume.* I am certain you would be greatly pained in doing it.

*Home.* I should never overcome the grief and anxiety so severe a duty would cause me.

*Hume.* You have now proved, better than I could have done in twenty *Essays*, that, if morality is not religion, neither is religion morality. Either of them, to be good (and the one must be and the other should be so), will produce good effects from the beginning to the end, and be followed by no remorse or repentance.

It would be presumptuous in me to quote the Bible to you, who are so much more conversant in it ; yet I cannot refrain from repeating, for my own satisfaction, the beautiful sentence on holiness: that “all her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” It says, not one or two paths, but *all*: for vice hath one or two passably pleasant in the season, if we could forget that, when we would return, the road is difficult to find, and must be picked out in the dark. Imagine anything in the semblance of a duty attended by regret and sorrow, and be assured that holiness has no

concern in it. Admonition, it is true, is sometimes of such a nature, from that of the irregularity it would correct, as to occasion a sigh or a blush to him who gives it : in this case, the sensation so manifested adds weight to the reproof and indemnifies the reprover. He is happy to have done what from generosity and tenderness of heart he was sorry and slow to do ; and the person in whose behalf he acted must be degraded beneath the dignity of manhood, if he feels less for himself than another has felt for him. The regret is not at the performance of his duty, but at the failure of its effect.

To produce as much happiness as we can, and to prevent as much misery, is the proper aim and end of true morality and true religion. Only give things their right direction : there is room, do but place and train them well.

*Home.* What ! room for vice and wickedness ?

*Hume.* There was a time when what is wine was not wine, when what is vinegar was not vinegar, when what is corruption was not corruption. That which would turn into vice may not only not turn into it, but may, by discreet and attentive management, become the ground-work of virtue. A little watchfulness over ourselves will save us a great deal of watchfulness over others, and will permit the kindest of religions to drop her inconvenient and unseemly talk of enmity and strife, cuirasses and breastplates, battles and exterminations.

*Home.* These carnal terms are frequent in the books of the Old Testament.

*Hume.* Because the books of the Old Testament were written when the world was much more barbarous and ferocious than it is at present ; and legislators must accommodate their language to the customs and manners of the country.

*Home.* Apparently you would rather abolish the forcible expressions of our pious reformers, than the abominations at which their souls revolted. I am afraid you would hesitate as little to demolish kirks as convents, to drive out ministers as monks.

*Hume.* I would let ministers and their kirks alone. I would abolish monasteries, but gradually and humanely; and not until I had discovered how and where the studious and pious could spend their time better. I hold religion in the light of a medal which has contracted rust from ages. This rust seems to have been its preserver for many centuries, but after some few more will certainly be its consumer, and leave no vestige of effigy or superscription behind: it should be detached carefully and patiently, not ignorantly and rudely scoured off. Happiness may be taken away from many with the design of communicating it to more: but that which is a grateful and refreshing odour in a limited space would be none whatever in a larger; that which is comfortable warmth to the domestic circle would not awaken the chirping of a cricket, or stimulate the flight of a butterfly, in the forest; that which satisfies a hundred poor monks would, if thrown open to society at large, contribute not an atom to its benefit and emolument. Placid tempers, regulated habitudes, consolatory visitations, are suppressed and destroyed, and nothing rises from their ruins. Better let the cell be standing, than level it only for the thorn and nettle.

*Home.* What good do these idlers with their cords and wallets, or, if you please, with their regularities?

*Hume.* These have their value, at least to the possessor and the few about him. Ask rather, what is the worth of his abode to the prince or to the public? Who is the wiser for his cowl, the warmer for his frock, the more contented

for his cloister, when they are taken from him? Monks, it is true, are only as stars that shine upon the desert; but tell me, I beseech you, who caused such a desert in the moral world, and who rendered so faint a light, in some of its periods, a blessing? Ignorant rulers, must be the answer, and inhuman laws. They should cease to exist some time before their antidotes, however ill-compounded, are cast away.

If we had lived seven or eight centuries ago, John Home would probably have been saying Mass at the altar, and David Hume, fatter and lazier, would have been pursuing his theological studies in the convent. We are so much the creatures of times and seasons, so modified and fashioned by them, that the very plants upon the wall, if they were as sensible as some suppose them to be, would laugh at us.

*Home.* Fantastic forms and ceremonies are rather what the philosopher will reprehend. Strip away these, reduce things to their primitive state of purity and holiness, and nothing can alter or shake us, clinging, as we should, to the anchor of faith.

*Hume.* People clung to it long ago; but many lost their grasp, benumbed by holding too tightly. The Church of Scotland brings close together the objects of veneration and abhorrence. The evil principle, or devil, was, in my opinion, hardly worth the expense of his voyage from Persia; but, since you have him, you seem resolved to treat him nobly, hating him, defying him, and fearing him nevertheless. I would not, however, place him so very near the Creator, let his pretensions, from custom and precedent, be what they may.

*Home.* He is always marring the fair works of our Heavenly Father: in this labour is his only proximity.

*Hume.* You represent him as spurring men on to



wickedness, from no other motive than the pleasure he experiences in rendering them miserable.

*Home.* He has no other, excepting his inveterate spite and malice against God ; from which, indeed, to speak more properly, this desire originates.

*Hume.* Has he lost his wits, as well as his station, that he fancies he can render God unhappy by being spiteful and malicious? You wrong him greatly ; but you wrong God more. For in all Satan's attempts to seduce men into wickedness, he leaves every one his free will either to resist or yield ; but the Heavenly Father, as you would represent him, predestines the greater part of mankind to everlasting pains and torments, antecedently to corruption or temptation. There is no impiety in asking you which is the worst : for impiety most certainly does not consist in setting men right on what is demonstrable in their religion, nor in proving to them that God is greater and better than, with all their zeal for him, they have ever thought him.

*Home.* This is to confound religion with philosophy, the source of nearly every evil in conduct and of every error in ethics.

*Hume.* Religion is the eldest sister of Philosophy : on whatever subjects they may differ, it is unbecoming in either to quarrel, and most so about their inheritance.

*Home.* And have you nothing, sir, to say against the pomps and vanities of other worships, that you should assail the institutions of your native country? To fear God, I must suppose, then, is less meritorious than to build steeples, and embroider suplices, and compose chants, and blow the bellows of organs.

*Hume.* My dear sir, it is not because God is delighted with hymns and instruments of music, or prefers bass to tenor or tenor to bass, or Handel to Giles Hallaway, that

nations throng to celebrate in their churches his power and his beneficence; it is not that Inigo Jones or Christopher Wren could erect to him a habitation more worthy of his presence than the humblest cottage on the loneliest moor: it is that the best feelings, the highest faculties, the greatest wealth, should be displayed and exercised in the patrimonial palace of every family united. For such are churches both to the rich and poor.

*Home.* Your hand, David! Pardon me, sir: the sentiment carried me beyond custom; for it recalled to me the moments of blissful enthusiasm when I was writing my tragedy, and charmed me the more as coming from you.

*Hume.* I explain the causes of things, and leave them.

*Home.* Go on, sir, pray go on; for here we can walk together. Suppose that God never heard us, never cared for us: do those care for you or hear you whose exploits you celebrate at public dinners—our Wallaces and Bruces? Yet are not we thence the braver, the more generous, the more grateful?

*Hume.* I do not see clearly how the more grateful; but I would not analyse by reducing to a cinder a lofty sentiment.

*Home.* Every act of gratitude is rewarded by reproduction. Justice is often pale and melancholy; but Gratitude, her daughter, is constantly in the flow of spirits and the bloom of loveliness. You call out to her when you fancy she is passing; you want her for your dependants, your domestics, your friends, your children. The ancients, as you know, habitually asked their gods and goddesses by which of their names it was most agreeable to them to be invoked: now let Gratitude be, what for the play of our fancy we have just imagined her, a sentient living power; I cannot think of any name more likely to be pleasing to

her than Religion. The simplest breast often holds more reason in it than it knows of, and more than Philosophy looks for or suspects. We almost as frequently despise what is not despicable as we admire and reverence what is. No nation in the world was ever so enlightened, and in all parts and qualities so civilised, as the Scotch. Why would you shake or unsettle or disturb those principles which have rendered us peaceable and contented?

*Hume.* I would not by any means.

*Home.* Many of your writings have evidently such a tendency.

*Hume.* Those of my writings to which you refer will be read by no nation : a few speculative men will take them ; but none will be rendered more gloomy, more dissatisfied, or more unsocial by them. Rarely will you find one who, five minutes together, can fix his mind even on the surface : some new tune, some idle project, some light thought, some impracticable wish, will generally run, like the dazzling haze of summer on the dry heath, betwixt them and the reader. A bagpipe will swallow them up, a strathspey will dissipate them, or Romance with the death-rattle in her throat will drive them away into dark staircases and charnel-houses.

You and I, in the course of our conversation, have been at variance, as much as discreet and honest men ought to be : each knows that the other thinks differently from him, yet each esteems the other. I cannot but smile when I reflect that a few paces, a glass of wine, a cup of tea, conciliate those whom Wisdom would keep asunder.

*Home.* No wonder you scoff emphatically, as you pronounce the word *wisdom*.

*Hume.* If men would permit their minds like their children to associate freely together, if they would agree to

meet one another with smiles and frankness, instead of suspicion and defiance, the common stock of intelligence and of happiness would be centupled. Probably those two men who hate each other most, and whose best husbandry is to sow burs and thistles in each other's path, would, if they had ever met and conversed familiarly, have been ardent and inseparable friends. The minister who may order my book to be burned to-morrow by the hangman, if I, by any accident, had been seated yesterday by his side at dinner, might perhaps in another fortnight recommend me to his master, for a man of such gravity and understanding as to be worthy of being a privy councillor, and might conduct me to the treasury bench.

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## ALFIERI AND SALOMON THE FLORENTINE JEW.

*Alfieri.* Let us walk to the window, signor Salomon. And now, instead of the silly, simpering compliments repeated at introductions, let me assure you that you are the only man in Florence with whom I would willingly exchange a salutation.

*Salomon.* I must think myself highly flattered, signor Conte, having always heard that you are not only the greatest democrat, but also the greatest aristocrat, in Europe.

*Alfieri.* These two things, however opposite, which your smile would indicate, are not so irreconcilable as you imagine. Let us first understand the words, and then talk about them. The democrat is he who wishes the people to

have a due share in the government, and this share if you please shall be the principal one. The aristocrat of our days is contented with no actual share in it; but if a man of family is conscious of his dignity, and resentful that another has invaded it, he may be, and is universally, called an aristocrat. The principal difference is, that one carries outward what the other carries inward. I am thought an aristocrat by the Florentines for conversing with few people, and for changing my shirt and shaving my beard on other days than festivals; which the most aristocratical of them never do, considering it, no doubt, as an excess. I am, however, from my soul a republican, if prudence and modesty will authorise any man to call himself so; and this, I trust, I have demonstrated in the most valuable of my works, the *Treatise on Tyranny* and the *Dialogue* with my friends at Siena. The aristocratical part of me, if part of me it must be called, hangs loose and keeps off insects.\* I see no aristocracy in the children of sharpers from behind the counter, nor, placing the matter in the most favourable point of view, in the descendants of free citizens who accepted from any vile enslaver—French, Spanish, German, or priest, or monk (represented with a piece of buffoonery, like a beehive on his head and a pick-lock key at his girdle)—the titles of counts and marquises. In Piedmont the matter is different: we must either have been the rabble or the lords; we were military, and we retain over the populace the same rank and spirit as our ancestors held over the soldiery.

*Salomon.* Signor Conte, I have heard of levellers, but I have never seen one: all are disposed to level down, but nobody to level up. As for nobility, there is none in Europe beside the Venetian. Nobility must be self-constituted and independent: the free alone are noble; slavery, like death,



levels all. The English comes nearest to the Venetian: they are independent, but want the main characteristic, the *self-constituted*. You have been in England, signor Conte, and can judge of them better than I can.

*Alfieri.* It is among those who stand between the peerage and the people that there exists a greater mass of virtue and of wisdom than in the rest of Europe. Much of their dignified simplicity may be attributed to the plainness of their religion, and, what will always be imitated, to the decorous life of their king: for whatever may be the defects of either, if we compare them with others round us, they are excellent.

*Salomon.* A young religion jumps upon the shoulders of an older one, and soon becomes like her, by mockery of her tricks, her cant, and her decrepitude. Meanwhile the old one shakes with indignation, and swears there is neither relationship nor likeness. Was there ever a religion in the world that was not the true religion, or was there ever a king that was not the best of kings?

*Alfieri.* In the latter case we must have arrived nigh perfection; since it is evident from the authority of the gravest men—theologians, presidents, judges, corporations, universities, senates—that every prince is better than his father, “of blessed memory, now with God.” If they continue to rise thus transcendently, earth in a little time will be incapable of holding them, and higher heavens must be raised upon the highest heavens for their reception. The lumber of our Italian courts, the most crazy part of which is that which rests upon a red cushion in a gilt chair, with stars and sheep and crosses dangling from it, must be approached as Artaxerxes and Domitian. These automats, we are told nevertheless, are very condescending.

Poor fools who tell us it ! ignorant that where on one side is condescension, on the other side must be baseness. The rascals have ruined my physiognomy. I wear an habitual sneer upon my face, God confound them for it ! even when I whisper a word of love in the prone ear of my donna.

*Salomon.* This temper or constitution of mind I am afraid may do injury to your works.

*Alfieri.* Surely not to all : my satire at least must be the better for it.

*Salomon.* I think differently. No satire can be excellent where displeasure is expressed with acrimony and vehemence. When satire ceases to smile, it should be momentarily, and for the purpose of inculcating a moral. Juvenal is hardly more a satirist than Lucan : he is indeed a vigorous and bold declaimer, but he stamps too often, and splashes up too much filth. We Italians have no delicacy in wit : we have indeed no conception of it ; we fancy we must be weak if we are not offensive. The scream of Pulcinello is imitated more easily than the masterly strokes of Plautus, or the sly insinuations of Catullus and of Flaccus.

*Alfieri.* We are the least witty of men because we are the most trifling.

*Salomon.* You would persuade me then that to be witty one must be grave : this is surely a contradiction.

*Alfieri.* I would persuade you only that banter, pun, and quibble are the properties of light men and shallow capacities ; that genuine humour and true wit require a sound and capacious mind, which is always a grave one. Contemptuousness is not incompatible with them : worthless is that man who feels no contempt for the worthless, and weak who treats their emptiness as a thing of weight. At first it may seem a paradox, but it is perfectly true, that

the gravest nations have been the wittiest; and in those nations some of the gravest men.' In England Swift and Addison, in Spain Cervantes. Rabelais and La Fontaine are recorded by their countrymen to have been *rêveurs*. Few men have been graver than Pascal; few have been wittier.

That Shakespeare was gay and pleasurable in conversation I can easily admit; for there never was a mind at once so plastic and so pliant: but without much gravity, could there have been that potency and comprehensiveness of thought, that depth of feeling, that creation of imperishable ideas, that sojourn in the souls of other men? He was amused in his workshop: such was society. But when he left it, he meditated intensely upon those limbs and muscles on which he was about to bestow new action, grace, and majesty; and so great an intensity of meditation must have strongly impressed his whole character.

*Salomon.* Certainly no race of men upon earth ever was so unwarlike, so indifferent to national dignity and to personal honour, as the Florentines are now: yet in former days a certain pride, arising from a resemblance in their government to that of Athens, excited a vivifying desire of approximation where no danger or loss accompanied it; and Genius was no less confident of his security than of his power. Look from the window. That cottage on the declivity was Dante's: that square and large mansion, with a circular garden before it elevated artificially, was the first scene of Boccaccio's *Decameron*. A boy might stand at an equal distance between them, and break the windows of each with his sling. What idle fabricators of crazy systems will tell me that climate is the creator of genius? The

climate of Austria is more regular and more temperate than ours, which I am inclined to believe is the most variable in the whole universe, subject, as you have perceived, to heavy fogs for two months in winter, and to a stifling heat, concentrated within the hills, for five more. Yet a single man of genius hath never appeared in the whole extent of Austria, an extent several thousand times greater than our city; and this very street has given birth to fifty.

*Alfieri.* Since the destruction of the republic, Florence has produced only one great man, Galileo, and abandoned him to every indignity that fanaticism and despotism could invent. Extraordinary men, like the stones that are formed in the higher regions of the air, fall upon the earth only to be broken and cast into the furnace. The precursor of Newton lived in the deserts of the moral world, drank water, and ate locusts and wild honey. It was fortunate that his head also was not lopped off: had a singer asked it, instead of a dancer, it would have been.

*Salomon.* In fact it was; for the fruits of it were shaken down and thrown away: he was forbidden to publish the most important of his discoveries, and the better part of his manuscripts was burned after his death.

*Alfieri.* Yes, signor Salomon, those things may rather be called our heads than this knob above the shoulder, of which (as matters stand) we are rather the porters than the proprietors, and which is really the joint concern of barber and dentist.

*Salomon.* Our thoughts, if they may not rest at home, may wander freely. Delighting in the remoter glories of my native city, I forget at times its humiliation and ignominy. A town so little that the voice of a cabbage-girl in the midst of it may be heard at the extremities, reared within three centuries a greater number of citizens illustrious

for their genius than all the remainder of the continent (excepting her sister Athens) in six thousand years. My ignorance of the Greek forbids me to compare our Dante with Homer. The propriety and force of language and the harmony of verse in the glorious Grecian are quite lost to me. Dante had not only to compose a poem, but in great part a language. Fantastical as the plan of his poem is, and, I will add, uninteresting and uninviting ; unimportant, mean, contemptible, as are nine-tenths of his characters and his details, and wearisome as is the scheme of his versification—there are more thoughts highly poetical, there is more reflection, and the nobler properties of mind and intellect are brought into more intense action, not only than in the whole course of French poetry, but also in the whole of continental ; nor do I think (I must here also speak with hesitation) that any one drama of Shakespeare contains so many. Smile as you will, signor Conte, what must I think of a city where Michel Angelo, Frate Bartolomeo, Ghiberti (who formed them), Guicciardini, and Machiavelli were secondary men ? And certainly such were they, if we compare them with Galileo and Boccaccio and Dante.

*Alfieri.* I smiled from pure delight, which I rarely do ; for I take an interest deep and vital in such men, and in those who appreciate them rightly and praise them unreservedly. These are my fellow-citizens : I acknowledge no other ; we are of the same tribe, of the same household ; I bow to them as being older than myself, and I love them as being better.

*Salomon.* Let us hope that our Italy is not yet effete. Filangieri died but lately : what think you of him ?

*Alfieri.* If it were possible that I could ever see his statue in a square at Constantinople, though I should be scourged for an idolater, I would kiss the pedestal. As



this, however, is less likely than that I should suffer for writing satirically, and as criticism is less likely to mislead me than speculation, I will revert to our former subject.

Indignation and contempt may be expressed in other poems than such as are usually called satires. Filicaia, in his celebrated address to Italy, steers a middle course.

A perfect piece of criticism must exhibit *where* a work is good or bad ; *why* it is good or bad ; in what degree it is good or bad ; must also demonstrate in what manner, and to what extent the same ideas or reflections have come to others, and, if they be clothed in poetry, why by an apparently slight variation, what in one author is mediocrity, in another is excellence. I have never seen a critic of Florence, or Pisa, or Milan, or Bologna, who did not commend and admire the sonnet of Cassiani on the rape of Proserpine, without a suspicion of its manifold and grave defects.

Does not this describe the devils of our carnival, rather than the majestic brother of Jupiter, at whose side upon asphodel and amaranth the sweet Persephone sits pensively contented, in that deep motionless quiet which mortals pity and which the gods enjoy ; rather than him who, under the umbrage of Elysium, gazes at once upon all the beauties that on earth were separated—Helena and Eriphyle, Polyxena and Hermione, Deidamia and Deianira, Leda and Omphale, Atalanta and Cydippe, Laodamia, with her arm round the neck of a fond youth whom she still seems afraid of losing, and, apart, the daughters of Niobe clinging to their parent ?

*Salomon.* These images are better than satires ; but continue, in preference to other thoughts or pursuits, the noble

career you have entered. Be contented, signor Conte, with the glory of our first great dramatist, and neglect altogether any inferior one. Why vex and torment yourself about the French? They buzz and are troublesome while they are swarming; but the master will soon hive them. Is the whole nation worth the worst of your tragedies? All the present race of them, all the creatures in the world which excite your indignation, will lie in the grave, while young and old are clapping their hands or beating their bosoms at your *Bruto Primo*. Consider also that kings and emperors should in your estimation be but as grasshoppers and beetles: let them consume a few blades of your clover without molesting them, without bringing them to crawl on you and claw you. The difference between them and men of genius is almost as great as between men of genius and those higher intelligences who act in immediate subordination to the Almighty. Yes, I assert it, without flattery and without fear, the angels are not higher above mortals than you are above the proudest that trample on them.

*Alfieri*. I believe, sir, you were the first in commending my tragedies.

*Salomon*. He who first praises a good book becomingly is next in merit to the author.

*Alfieri*. As a writer and as a man I know my station: if I found in the world five equal to myself, I would walk out of it, not to be jostled.

I must now, signor Salomon, take my leave of you; for his Eminence my coachman and their Excellencies my horses are waiting.

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## ROUSSEAU AND MALESHERBES.

*Rousseau.* I am ashamed, sir, of my countrymen: let my humiliation expiate their offence. I wish it had not been a minister of the gospel who received you with such inhospitality.

*Malesherbes.* Nothing can be more ardent and more cordial than the expressions with which you greet me, M. Rousseau, on my return from your lakes and mountains.

*Rousseau.* If the pastor took you for a courtier, I reverence him for his contemptuousness.

*Malesherbes.* Why so? Indeed you are in the wrong, my friend. No person has a right to treat another with contemptuousness unless he knows him to deserve it. When a courtier enters the house of a pastor in preference to the next, the pastor should partake in the sentiment that induced him, or at least not be offended to be preferred. A courtier is such at court: in the house of a clergyman he is not a courtier, but a guest. If to be a courtier is offensive, remember that we punish offences where they are committed, where they can be examined, where pleadings can be heard for and against the accused, and where nothing is admitted extraneous from the indictment, excepting what may be adduced in his behalf by witnesses to the general tenor of his character.

*Rousseau.* Is it really true that the man told you to mount the hay-loft if you wished a night's lodging?

*Malesherbes.* He did: a certain proof that he no more took me to be a courtier than I took him to be. I accepted his offer, and never slept so soundly. Moderate fatigue, the

Alpine air, the blaze of a good fire (for I was admitted to it some moments), and a profusion of odoriferous hay, below which a cow was sleeping, subdued my senses, and protracted my slumbers beyond the usual hour.

*Rousseau.* You have no right, sir, to be the patron and remunerator of inhospitality. Three or four such men as you would corrupt all Switzerland, and prepare it for the fangs of France and Austria. Kings, like hyenas, will always fall upon dead carcasses, although their bellies are full, and although they are conscious that in the end they will tear one another to pieces over them. Why should you prepare their prey? Were your fire and effulgence given you for this? Why, in short, did you thank this churl? Why did you recommend him to his superiors for preferment on the next vacancy?

*Malesherbes.* I must adopt your opinion of his behaviour in order to answer you satisfactorily. You suppose him inhospitable: what milder or more effectual mode of reproving him, than to make every dish at his table admonish him? If he did evil, have I no authority before me which commands me to render him good for it? Believe me, M. Rousseau, the execution of this command is always accompanied by the heart's applause, and opportunities of obedience are more frequent here than anywhere. Would not you exchange resentment for the contrary feeling, even if religion or duty said nothing about the matter? I am afraid the most philosophical of us are sometimes a little perverse, and will not be so happy as they might be, because the path is pointed out to them, and because he who points it out is wise and powerful. Obstinacy and jealousy, the worst parts of childhood and of manhood, have range enough for their ill humours without the heavens.

*Rousseau.* Sir, I perceive you are among my enemies. I

did not think it ; for, whatever may be my faults, I am totally free from suspicion.

*Malesherbes.* And do not think it now, I entreat you, my good friend.

*Rousseau.* Courts and society have corrupted the best heart in France, and have perverted the best intellect.

*Malesherbes.* They have done much evil then.

*Rousseau.* Answer me, and your own conscience : how could you choose to live among the perfidies of Paris and Versailles ?

*Malesherbes.* Lawyers, and advocates in particular, must live there ; philosophers need not. If every honest man thought it requisite to leave those cities, would the inhabitants be the better ?

*Rousseau.* You have entered into intimacies with the members of various administrations, opposite in plans and sentiments, but alike hostile to you, and all of whom, if they could have kept your talents down, would have done it. Finding the thing impossible, they ceased to persecute, and would gladly tempt you under the semblance of friendship and esteem to supplicate for some office, that they might indicate to the world your unworthiness by refusing you : a proof, as you know, quite sufficient and self-evident.

*Malesherbes.* They will never tempt me to supplicate for anything but justice, and that in behalf of others. I know nothing of parties. If I am acquainted with two persons of opposite sides in politics, I consider them as you consider a watchmaker and a cabinet-maker : one desires to rise by one way, the other by another. Administrations and systems of government would be quite indifferent to those very functionaries and their opponents, who appear the most zealous partisans, if their fortunes and consequence were not affixed to them. Several of these men seem



consistent, and indeed are ; the reason is, versatility would loosen and detach from them the public esteem and confidence——

*Rousseau.* By which their girandoles are lighted, their dinners served, their lacqueys liveried, and their opera-girls vie in benefit-nights. There is no State in Europe where the least wise have not governed the most wise. We find the light and foolish keeping up with the machinery of government easily and leisurely, just as we see butterflies keep up with carriages at full speed. This is owing in both cases to their levity and their position : the stronger and the more active are left behind. I am resolved to prove that farmers-general are the main causes of the defects in our music.

*Malesherbes.* Prove it, or anything else, provided that the discussion does not irritate and torment you.

*Rousseau.* Truth is the object of philosophy.

*Malesherbes.* Not of philosophers : the display of ingenuity, for the most part, is and always has been it. I must here offer you an opinion of my own, which, if you think well of me, you will pardon, though you should disbelieve its solidity. My opinion then is, that truth is not reasonably the main and ultimate object of philosophy ; but that philosophy should seek truth merely as the means of acquiring and of propagating happiness. Truths are simple ; wisdom, which is formed by their apposition and application, is concrete : out of this, in its vast varieties, open to our wants and wishes, comes happiness. But the knowledge of all the truths ever yet discovered does not lead immediately to it, nor indeed will ever reach it, unless you make the more important of them bear upon your heart and intellect, and form, as it were, the blood that moves and nurtures them.

*Rousseau.* I never until now entertained a doubt that truth is the ultimate aim and object of philosophy: no writer has denied it, I think.

*Malesherbes.* Designedly none may: but when it is agreed that happiness is the chief good, it must also be agreed that the chief wisdom will pursue it; and I have already said, what your own experience cannot but have pointed out to you, that no truth, or series of truths, hypothetically, can communicate or attain it. Come, M. Rousseau, tell me candidly, do you derive no pleasure from a sense of superiority in genius and independence?

*Rousseau.* The highest, sir, from a consciousness of independence.

*Malesherbes.* *Ingenuous* is the epithet we affix to modesty, but modesty often makes men act otherwise than ingenuously: you, for example, now. You are angry at the servility of people, and disgusted at their obtuseness and indifference, on matters of most import to their welfare. If they were equal to you, this anger would cease; but the fire would break out somewhere else, on ground which appears at present sound and level. Voltaire, for instance, is less eloquent than you: but Voltaire is wittier than any man living. This quality——

*Rousseau.* Is the quality of a buffoon and a courtier. But the buffoon should have most of it, to support his higher dignity.

*Malesherbes.* Voltaire's is Attic.

*Rousseau.* If malignity is Attic. Petulance is not wit, although a few grains of wit may be found in petulance: quartz is not gold, although a few grains of gold may be found in quartz. Voltaire is a monkey in mischief, and a spaniel in obsequiousness. He declaims against the cruel and tyrannical; and he kisses the hands of adultresses who

murder their husbands, and of robbers who decimate their gang.

*Malesherbes.* I will not discuss with you the character of the man, and only that part of the author's on which I spoke. There may be malignity in wit, there cannot be violence. You may irritate and disquiet with it; but it must be by means of a flower or a feather. Wit and humour stand on one side, irony and sarcasm on the other.

*Rousseau.* They are in near neighbourhood.

*Malesherbes.* So are the Elysian fields and Tartarus.

*Rousseau.* Pray, go on : teach me to stand quiet in my stall, while my masters and managers pass by.

*Malesherbes.* Well then—Pascal argues as closely and methodically ; Bossuet is as scientific in the structure of his sentences ; Demosthenes, many think, has equal fire, vigour, dexterity : equal selection of topics and equal temperance in treating them, immeasurably as he falls short of you in appeals to the sensibility, and in everything which by way of excellence we usually call genius.

*Rousseau.* Sir, I see no resemblance between a pleader at the bar, or a haranguer of the populace, and me.

*Malesherbes.* Certainly his questions are occasional : but one great question hangs in the centre, and high above the rest ; and this is, whether the Mother of liberty and civilisation shall exist, or whether she shall be extinguished in the bosom of her family. As we often apply to Eloquence and her parts the terms we apply to Architecture and hers, let me do it also, and remark that nothing can be more simple, solid, and symmetrical, nothing more frugal in decoration or more appropriate in distribution, than the apartments of Demosthenes. Yours excel them in space and altitude ; your ornaments are equally chaste and beautiful, with more variety and invention, more airiness and light. But why,

among the Loves and Graces, does Apollo flay Marsyas?—and why may not the tiara still cover the ears of Midas? Cannot you, who detest kings and courtiers, keep away from them? If I must be with them, let me be in good humour and good spirits. If I will tread upon a Persian carpet, let it at least be in clean shoes.

As the raciest wine makes the sharpest vinegar, so the richest fancies turn the most readily to acrimony. Keep yours, my dear M. Rousseau, from the exposure and heats that generate it. Be contented; enjoy your fine imagination; and do not throw your salad out of window, nor shove your cat off your knee, on hearing it said that Shakespeare has a finer, or that a minister is of opinion that you know more of music than of state. My friend! the quarrels of ingenious men are generally far less reasonable and just, less placable and moderate, than those of the stupid and ignorant. We ought to blush at this: and we should blush yet more deeply if we bring them in as parties to our differences. Let us conquer by kindness; which we cannot do easily or well without communication.

*Rousseau.* The minister would expel me from his antechamber, and order his valets to buffet me, if I offered him any proposal for the advantage of mankind.

*Malesherbes.* Call to him, then, from this room, where the valets are civiler. Nature has given you a speaking-trumpet, which neither storm can drown nor enemy can silence. If you esteem him, instruct him; if you despise him, do the same. Surely, you who have much benevolence would not despise any one willingly or unnecessarily. Contempt is for the incorrigible: now, where upon earth is he whom your genius, if rightly and temperately exerted, would not influence and correct?

I never was more flattered or honoured than by your

patience in listening to me. Consider me as an old woman who sits by the bedside in your infirmity, who brings you no savoury viand, no exotic fruit, but a basin of whey or a basket of strawberries from your native hills ; assures you that what oppressed you was a dream, occasioned by the wrong position in which you lay ; opens the window, gives you fresh air, and entreats you to recollect the features of Nature, and to observe (which no man ever did so accurately) their beauty. In your politics you cut down a forest to make a toothpick, and cannot make even that out of it ! Do not let us in jurisprudence be like critics in the classics, and change whatever can be changed, right or wrong. No statesman will take your advice. Supposing that any one is liberal in his sentiments and clear-sighted in his views, nevertheless love of power is jealous, and he would rejoice to see you fleeing from persecution or turning to meet it. The very men whom you would benefit will treat you worse. As the ministers of kings wish their masters to possess absolute power that the exercise of it may be delegated to them, which it naturally is from the violence and sloth alternate with despots as with wild beasts, and that they may apprehend no check or control from those who discover their misdemeanours, in like manner the people places more trust in favour than in fortune, and hopes to obtain by subserviency what it never might by election or by chance. Else in free governments, so some are called (for names once given are the last things lost), all minor offices and employments would be assigned by ballot. Each province or canton would present a list annually of such persons in it as are worthy to occupy the local administrations.

To avoid any allusion to the country in which we live, let us take England for example. Is it not absurd,



iniquitous, and revolting, that the minister of a church in Yorkshire should be appointed by a lawyer in London, who never knew him, never saw him, never heard from a single one of the parishioners a recommendation of any kind? Is it not more reasonable that a justice of the peace should be chosen by those who have always been witnesses of his integrity?

*Rousseau.* The king should appoint his ministers, and should invest them with power and splendour; but those ministers should not appoint to any civil or religious place of trust or profit which the community could manifestly fill better. The greater part of offices and dignities should be conferred for a short and stated time, that all might hope to attain and strive to deserve them. Embassies in particular should never exceed one year in Europe, nor consulates two. To the latter office I assign this duration as the more difficult to fulfil properly, from requiring a knowledge of trade, although a slight one, and because those who possess any such knowledge are inclined for the greater part to turn it to their own account, which a consul ought by no means to do. Frequent election of representatives and of civil officers in the subordinate employments would remove most causes of discontent in the people, and of instability in kingly power. Here is a lottery in which every one is sure of a prize, if not for himself, at least for somebody in his family or among his friends; and the ticket would be fairly paid for out of the taxes.

*Malesherbes.* So it appears to me. What other system can present so obviously to the great mass of the people the two principal piers and buttresses of government, tangible interest and reasonable hope? No danger of any kind can arise from it, no antipathies, no divisions, no imposture of demagogues, no caprice of despots. On the

contrary, many and great advantages in places which at the first survey do not appear to border on it. At present, the best of the English juridical institutions, that of justices of the peace, is viewed with diffidence and distrust. Elected as they would be, and increased in number, the whole judicature, civil and criminal, might be confided to them, and their labours be not only not aggravated but diminished. Suppose them in four divisions to meet at four places in every county once in twenty days, and to possess the power of imposing a fine not exceeding two hundred francs on every cause implying oppression, and one not exceeding fifty on such as they should unanimously declare frivolous.

*Rousseau.* Few would become attorneys, and those from among the indigent.

*Malesherbes.* Almost the greatest evil that exists in the world, moral or physical, would be removed. A second appeal might be made in the following session; a third could only come before Parliament, and this alone by means of attorneys, the number of whom altogether would not exceed the number of coroners; for in England there are as many who cut their own throats as who would cut their own purses.

*Rousseau.* The famous *trial by jury* would cease: this would disgust the English.

*Malesherbes.* The number of justices would be much augmented: nearly all those who now are jurymen would enjoy this rank and dignity, and would be flattered by sitting on the same bench with the first gentlemen of the land.

*Rousseau.* What number would sit?

*Malesherbes.* Three or five in the first instance; five or seven in the second—as the number of causes should permit.

*Rousseau.* The laws of England are extremely intricate and perplexed : such men would be puzzled.

*Malesherbes.* Such men having no interest in the perplexity, but on the contrary an interest in unravelling it, would see such laws corrected. Intricate as they are, questions on those which are the most so are usually referred by the judges themselves to private arbitration ; of which my plan, I conceive, has all the advantages, united to those of open and free discussion among men of unperverted sense, and unbiassed by professional hopes and interests. The different courts of law in England cost about seventy millions of francs annually. On my system, the justices or judges would receive five-and-twenty francs daily ; as the *special jurymen* do now, without any sense of shame or impropriety, however rich they may be : such being the established practice.

*Rousseau.* Seventy millions ! seventy millions !

*Malesherbes.* There are attorneys and conveyancers in London who gain one hundred thousand francs a-year, and advocates more. The chancellor——

*Rousseau.* The Celeno of these harpies——

*Malesherbes.* Nets above one million, and is greatly more than an archbishop in the church, scattering preferment in Cumberland and Cornwall from his bench at Westminster.

*Rousseau.* Absurdities and enormities are great in proportion to custom or insuetude. If we had lived from childhood with a *boa constrictor*, we should think it no more a monster than a canary-bird. The sum you mentioned, of seventy millions, is incredible.

*Malesherbes.* In this estimate the expense of letters by the post, and of journeys made by the parties, is not and cannot be included.

*Rousseau.* The whole machine of government, civil and

religious, ought never to bear upon the people with a weight so oppressive. I do not add the national defence, which being principally naval is more costly, nor institutions for the promotion of the arts, which in a country like England ought to be liberal. But such an expenditure should nearly suffice for these also, in time of peace. Religion and law indeed should cost nothing: at present the one hangs property, the other quarters it. I am confounded at the profusion. I doubt whether the Romans expended so much in that year's war which dissolved the Carthaginian empire, and left them masters of the universe. What is certain, and what is better, it did not cost a tenth of it to colonise Pennsylvania, in whose forests the cradle of freedom is suspended, and where the eye of philanthropy, tired with tears and vigils, may wander and may rest. Your system, or rather your arrangement of one already established, pleases me. Ministers would only lose thereby that portion of their possessions which they give away to needy relatives, unworthy dependants, or the requisite supporters of their authority and power.

*Malesherbes.* On this plan, no such supporters would be necessary, no such dependants could exist, and no such relatives could be disappointed. Beside, the conflicts of their opponents must be periodical, weak, and irregular.

*Rousseau.* The craving for the rich carrion would be less keen; the zeal of opposition, as usual, would be measured by the stomach, whereon hope and overlooking have always a strong influence.

*Malesherbes.* My excellent friend, do not be offended with me for an ingenuous and frank confession: promise me your pardon.

*Rousseau.* You need none.

*Malesherbes.* Promise it, nevertheless.

*Rousseau.* You have said nothing, done nothing, which could in any way displease me.

*Malesherbes.* You grant me, then, a bill of indemnity for what I may have undertaken with a good intention since we have been together?

*Rousseau.* Willingly.

*Malesherbes.* I fell into your views, I walked along with you side by side, merely to occupy your mind, which I perceived was agitated.

In compliance with your humour, to engage your fancy, to divert it awhile from Switzerland, by which you appear and partly on my account to be offended, I began with reflections upon England: I raised up another cloud in the region of them, light enough to be fantastic and diaphanous, and to catch some little irradiation from its western sun. Do not run after it farther; it has vanished already. Consider: the three great nations——

*Rousseau.* Pray, which are those?

*Malesherbes.* I cannot in conscience give the palm to the Hottentots, the Greenlanders, or the Hurons: I meant to designate those who united to empire the most social virtue and civil freedom. Athens, Rome, and England have received on the subject of government elaborate treatises from their greatest men. You have reasoned more dispassionately and profoundly on it than Plato has done, or probably than Cicero, led away as he often is by the authority of those who are inferior to himself: but do you excel Aristoteles in calm and patient investigation? Or, think you, are your reading and range of thought more extensive than Harrington's and Milton's? Yet what effect have the political works of these marvellous men produced upon the world?—what effect upon any one State, any one city, any one hamlet? A clerk in office, an



accountant, a gauger of small-beer, a song-writer for a tavern dinner, produces more. He thrusts his rags into the hole whence the wind comes, and sleeps soundly. While you and I are talking about elevations and proportions, pillars and pilasters, architraves and friezes, the buildings we should repair are falling to the earth, and the materials for their restoration are in the quarry.

*Rousseau.* I could answer you : but my mind has certain moments of repose, or rather of oscillation, which I would not for the world disturb. Music, eloquence, friendship, bring and prolong them.

*Malesherbes.* Enjoy them, my dear friend, and convert them if possible to months and years. It is as much at your arbitration on what theme you shall meditate, as in what meadow you shall botanise ; and you have as much at your option the choice of your thoughts, as of the keys in your harpsichord.

*Rousseau.* If this were true, who could be unhappy ?

*Malesherbes.* Those of whom it is not true. Those who from want of practice cannot manage their thoughts, who have few to select from, and who, because of their sloth or of their weakness, do not roll away the heaviest from before them.

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## LUCULLUS AND CÆSAR.

*Cæsar.* Lucius Lucullus, I come to you privately and unattended for reasons which you will know ; confiding, I dare not say in your friendship, since no service of mine toward you hath deserved it, but in your generous and

disinterested love of peace. Hear me on. Cneius Pompeius, according to the report of my connections in the city, had, on the instant of my leaving it for the province, begun to solicit his dependants to strip me ignominiously of authority. Neither vows nor affinity can bind him. He would degrade the father of his wife; he would humiliate his own children, the unoffending, the unborn; he would poison his own nascent love—at the suggestion of Ambition. Matters are now brought so far, that either he or I must submit to a reverse of fortune; since no concession can assuage his malice, divert his envy, or gratify his cupidity. No sooner could I raise myself up, from the consternation and stupefaction into which the certainty of these reports had thrown me, than I began to consider in what manner my own private afflictions might become the least noxious to the republic. Into whose arms, then, could I throw myself more naturally and more securely, to whose bosom could I commit and consign more sacredly the hopes and destinies of our beloved country, than his who laid down power in the midst of its enjoyments, in the vigour of youth, in the pride of triumph, when Dignity solicited, when Friendship urged, entreated, supplicated, and when Liberty herself invited and beckoned to him from the senatorial order and from the curule chair? Betrayed and abandoned by those we had confided in, our next friendship, if ever our hearts receive any, or if any will venture in those places of desolation, flies forward instinctively to what is most contrary and dissimilar. Cæsar is hence the visitant of Lucullus.

*Lucullus.* I had always thought Pompeius more moderate and more reserved than you represent him, Caius Julius; and yet I am considered in general, and surely you also will consider me, but little liable to be prepossessed by him.

*Cæsar.* Unless he may have ingratiated himself with you recently, by the administration of that worthy whom last winter his partisans dragged before the Senate, and forced to assert publicly that you and Cato had instigated a party to circumvent and murder him ; and whose carcass, a few days afterward, when it had been announced that he had died by a natural death, was found covered with bruises, stabs, and dislocations.

*Lucullus.* You bring much to my memory which had quite slipped out of it, and I wonder that it could make such an impression on yours. A proof to me that the interest you take in my behalf began earlier than your delicacy will permit you to acknowledge. You are fatigued, which I ought to have perceived before.

*Cæsar.* Not at all ; the fresh air has given me life and alertness : I feel it upon my cheek even in the room.

*Lucullus.* After our dinner and sleep, we will spend the remainder of the day on the subject of your visit.

*Cæsar.* Those Ethiopian slaves of yours shiver with cold upon the mountain here ; and truly I myself was not insensible to the change of climate, in the way from Mutina.

What white bread ! I never found such even at Naples or Capua. This Formian wine (which I prefer to the Chian), how exquisite !

*Lucullus.* Such is the urbanity of Cæsar, even while he bites his lip with displeasure. How ! surely it bleeds ! Permit me to examine the cup.

*Cæsar.* I believe a jewel has fallen out of the rim in the carriage : the gold is rough there.

*Lucullus.* Marcipor, let me never see that cup again ! No answer, I desire. My guest pardons heavier faults. Mind that dinner be prepared for us shortly.

*Cæsar.* In the meantime, Lucullus, if your health

permits it, shall we walk a few paces round the villa? for I have not seen anything of the kind before.

*Lucullus.* The walls are double; the space between them two feet: the materials for the most part earth and straw. Two hundred slaves, and about as many mules and oxen, brought the beams and rafters up the mountain; my architects fixed them at once in their places: every part was ready, even the wooden nails. The roof is thatched, you see.

*Cæsar.* Is there no danger that so light a material should be carried off by the winds, on such an eminence?

*Lucullus.* None resists them equally well.

*Cæsar.* On this immensely high mountain, I should be apprehensive of the lightning, which the poets, and I think the philosophers too, have told us strikes the highest.

*Lucullus.* The poets are right; for whatever is received as truth is truth in poetry; and a fable may illustrate like a fact. But the philosophers are wrong, as they generally are, even in the commonest things; because they seldom look beyond their own tenets, unless through captiousness, and because they argue more than they meditate, and display more than they examine. Archimedes and Euclid are, in my opinion, after our Epicurus, the worthiest of the name, having kept apart to the demonstrable, the practical, and the useful. Many of the rest are good writers and good disputants; but unfaithful suitors of simple science, boasters of their acquaintance with gods and goddesses, plagiarists and impostors. I had forgotten my roof, although it is composed of much the same materials as the philosophers'. Let the lightning fall: one handful of silver, or less, repairs the damage.

*Cæsar.* Impossible! nor indeed one thousand, nor twenty, if those tapestries and pictures are consumed.

*Lucullus.* True ; but only the thatch would burn. For, before the baths were tessellated, I filled the area with alum and water, and soaked the timbers and laths for many months, and covered them afterward with alum in powder, by means of liquid glue. Mithridates taught me this. Having in vain attacked with combustibles a wooden tower, I took it by stratagem, and found within it a mass of alum, which, if a great hurry had not been observed by us among the enemy in the attempt to conceal it, would have escaped our notice. I never scrupled to extort the truth from my prisoners ; but my instruments were purple robes and plate, and the only wheel in my armoury destined to such purposes was the wheel of Fortune.

*Cæsar.* I wish, in my campaigns, I could have equalled your clemency and humanity ; but the Gauls are more uncertain, fierce, and perfidious than the wildest tribes of Caucasus ; and our policy cannot be carried with us, it must be formed upon the spot. They love you, not for abstaining from hurting them, but for ceasing ; and they embrace you only at two seasons—when stripes are fresh, or when stripes are imminent. Elsewhere, I hope to become the rival of Lucullus in this admirable part of virtue.

I shall never build villas, because—but what are your proportions ? Surely the edifice is extremely low.

*Lucullus.* There is only one floor ; the height of the apartments is twenty feet to the cornice, five above it ; the breadth is twenty-five, the length forty. The building, as you perceive, is quadrangular : three sides contain four rooms each ; the other has many partitions and two stories, for domestics and offices. Here is my salt-bath.

*Cæsar.* A bath, indeed, for all the Nereids named by Hesiod, with room enough for the Tritons and their herds and horses.



*Lucullus.* Here stand my two cows. Their milk is brought to me with its warmth and froth; for it loses its salubrity both by repose and by motion. Pardon me, Cæsar: I shall appear to you to have forgotten that I am not conducting Marcus Varro.

*Cæsar.* You would convert him into Cacus: he would drive them off. What beautiful beasts! how sleek and white and cleanly! I never saw any like them, excepting when we sacrifice to Jupiter the stately leader from the pastures of the Clitumnus.

*Lucullus.* Often do I make a visit to these quiet creatures, and with no less pleasure than in former days to my horses. Nor indeed can I much wonder that whole nations have been consentaneous in treating them as objects of devotion: the only thing wonderful is that gratitude seems to have acted as powerfully and extensively as fear; indeed, more extensively, for no object of worship whatever has attracted so many worshippers. Where Jupiter has one, the cow has ten: she was venerated before he was born, and will be when even the carvers have forgotten him.

*Cæsar.* Unwillingly should I see it; for the character of our gods hath formed the character of our nation. Serapis and Isis have stolen in among them within our memory, and others will follow, until at last Saturn will not be the only one emasculated by his successor. What can be more august than our rites? The first dignitaries of the republic are emulous to administer them: nothing of low or venal has any place in them; nothing pusillanimous, nothing unsocial and austere. I speak of them as they were; before Superstition woke up again from her slumber, and caught to her bosom with maternal love the alluvial monsters of the Nile. Philosophy, never fit for the people, had entered

the best houses, and the image of Epicurus had taken the place of the Lemures. But men cannot bear to be deprived long together of anything they are used to, not even of their fears; and, by a reaction of the mind appertaining to our nature, new stimulants were looked for, not on the side of pleasure, where nothing new could be expected or imagined, but on the opposite. Irreligion is followed by fanaticism, and fanaticism by irreligion, alternately and perpetually.

*Lucullus.* The religion of our country, as you observe, is well adapted to its inhabitants. Our progenitor, Mars, hath Venus recumbent on his breast and looking up to him, teaching us that pleasure is to be sought in the bosom of valour and by the means of war. No great alteration, I think, will ever be made in our rites and ceremonies—the best and most imposing that could be collected from all nations, and uniting them to us by our complacence in adopting them. The gods themselves may change names, to flatter new power: and, indeed, as we degenerate, Religion will accommodate herself to our propensities and desires. Our heaven is now popular: it will become monarchal; not without a crowded court, as befits it, of apparitors and satellites and minions of both sexes, paid and caressed for carrying to their stern, dark-bearded master prayers and supplications. Altars must be strown with broken minds, and incense rise amid abject aspirations. Gods will be found unfit for their places; and it is not impossible that, in the ruin imminent from our contentions for power, and in the necessary extinction both of ancient families and of generous sentiments, our consular fasces may become the water-sprinklers of some upstart priesthood, and that my son may apply for lustration to the son of my groom. The interest of such men requires that the spirit

of arms and of arts be extinguished. They will predicate peace, that the people may be tractable to them ; but a religion altogether pacific is the fomentor of wars and the nurse of crimes, alluring Sloth from within and Violence from afar. If ever it should prevail among the Romans, it must prevail alone : for nations more vigorous and energetic will invade them, close upon them, trample them under foot ; and the name of Roman, which is now the most glorious, will become the most opprobrious upon earth.

*Cæsar.* The time, I hope, may be distant ; for next to my own name I hold my country's.

*Lucullus.* Mine, not coming from Troy or Ida, is lower in my estimation : I place my country's first.

You are surveying the little lake beside us. It contains no fish, birds never alight on it, the water is extremely pure and cold ; the walk round is pleasant, not only because there is always a gentle breeze from it, but because the turf is fine, and the surface of the mountain on this summit is perfectly on a level to a great extent in length—not a trifling advantage to me, who walk often and am weak. I have no alley, no garden, no enclosure ; the park is in the vale below, where a brook supplies the ponds, and where my servants are lodged ; for here I have only twelve in attendance.

*Cæsar.* What is that so white, towards the Adriatic ?

*Lucullus.* The Adriatic itself. Turn round and you may descry the Tuscan Sea. Our situation is reported to be among the highest of the Apennines.—Marcipor has made the sign to me that dinner is ready. Pass this way.

*Cæsar.* What a library is here ! Ah, Marcus Tullius ! I salute thy image. Why frownest thou upon me—collecting the consular robe and uplifting the right arm, as when Rome stood firm again, and Catiline fled before thee ?

*Lucullus.* Just so ; such was the action the statuary chose, as adding a new endearment to the memory of my absent friend.

*Cæsar.* Sylla, who honoured you above all men, is not here.

*Lucullus.* I have his *Commentaries* : he inscribed them, as you know, to me. Something even of our benefactors may be forgotten, and gratitude be unrequited.

*Cæsar.* The impression on that couch, and the two fresh honeysuckles in the leaves of those two books, would show, even to a stranger, that this room is peculiarly the master's. Are they sacred ?

*Lucullus.* To me and Cæsar.

*Cæsar.* I would have asked permission——

*Lucullus.* Caius Julius, you have nothing to ask of Polybius and Thucydides ; nor of Xenophon, the next to them on the table.

*Cæsar.* Thucydides ! the most generous, the most unprejudiced, the most sagacious, of historians. Now, Lucullus, you whose judgment in style is more accurate than any other Roman's, do tell me whether a commander, desirous of writing his *Commentaries*, could take to himself a more perfect model than Thucydides ?

*Lucullus.* Nothing is more perfect, nor ever will be : the scholar of Pericles, the master of Demosthenes, the equal of the one in military science, and of the other not the inferior in civil and forensic ; the calm dispassionate judge of the general by whom he was defeated, his defender, his encomiast. To talk of such men is conducive not only to virtue but to health.

. . . . .  
This other is my dining-room. You expect the dishes.

*Cæsar.* I misunderstood—I fancied——

*Lucullus.* Repose yourself, and touch with the ebony wand, beside you, the sphynx on either of those obelisks, right or left.

*Cæsar.* Let me look at them first.

*Lucullus.* The contrivance was intended for one person, or two at most, desirous of privacy and quiet. The blocks of jasper in my pair, and of porphyry in yours, easily yield in their grooves, each forming one partition. There are four, containing four platforms. The lower holds four dishes, such as sucking forest-boars, venison, hares, tunnies, sturgeons, which you will find within; the upper three, eight each, but diminutive. The confectionery is brought separately, for the steam would spoil it, if any should escape. The melons are in the snow, thirty feet under us: they came early this morning from a place in the vicinity of Luni, travelling by night.

*Cæsar.* I wonder not at anything of refined elegance in Lucullus; but really here Antiochia and Alexandria seem to have cooked for us, and magicians to be our attendants.

*Lucullus.* The absence of slaves from our repast is the luxury, for Marcipor alone enters, and he only when I press a spring with my foot or wand. When you desire his appearance, touch that chalcedony just before you.

*Cæsar.* I eat quick and rather plentifully; yet the valetudinarian (excuse my rusticity, for I rejoice at seeing it) appears to equal the traveller in appetite, and to be contented with one dish.

*Lucullus.* It is milk: such, with strawberries, which ripen on the Apennines many months in continuance, and some other berries of sharp and grateful flavour, has been my only diet since my first residence here. The state of my health requires it; and the habitude of nearly three months renders this food not only more commodious to my



studies and more conducive to my sleep, but also more agreeable to my palate than any other.

*Cæsar.* Returning to Rome or Baiæ, you must domesticate and tame them. The cherries you introduced from Pontus are now growing in Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul; and the largest and best in the world, perhaps, are upon the more sterile side of Lake Larius.

*Lucullus.* There are some fruits, and some virtues, which require a harsh soil and bleak exposure for their perfection.

*Cæsar.* In such a profusion of viands, and so savoury, I perceive no odour.

*Lucullus.* A flue conducts heat through the compartments of the obelisks; and, if you look up, you may observe that those gilt roses, between the astragals in the cornice, are prominent from it half a span. Here is an aperture in the wall, between which and the outer is a perpetual current of air. We are now in the dog-days; and I have never felt in the whole summer more heat than at Rome in many days of March.

*Cæsar.* Usually you are attended by troops of domestics and of dinner-friends, not to mention the learned and scientific, nor your own family, your attachment to which, from youth upward, is one of the higher graces in your character. Your brother was seldom absent from you.

*Lucullus.* Marcus was coming; but the vehement heats along the Arno, in which valley he has a property he never saw before, inflamed his blood, and he now is resting for a few days at Fæsulæ, a little town destroyed by Sylla within our memory, who left it only air and water, the best in Tuscany. The health of Marcus, like mine, has been declining for several months: we are running our last race against each other, and never was I, in youth along the Tiber, so anxious of first reaching the goal. I would not

outlive him : I should reflect too painfully on earlier days, and look forward too despondently on future. As for friends, lampreys and turbot beget them, and they spawn not amid the solitude of the Apennines. To dine in company with more than two is a Gaulish and German thing. I can hardly bring myself to believe that I have eaten in concert with twenty ; so barbarous and herdlike a practice does not now appear to me—such an incentive to drink much and talk loosely ; not to add, such a necessity to speak loud, which is clownish and odious in the extreme. On this mountain summit I hear no noises, no voices, not even of salutation ; we have no flies about us, and scarcely an insect or reptile.

*Cæsar.* Your amiable son is probably with his uncle : is he well ?

*Lucullus.* Perfectly. He was indeed with my brother in his intended visit to me ; but Marcus, unable to accompany him hither, or superintend his studies in the present state of his health, sent him directly to his Uncle Cato at Tusculum—a man fitter than either of us to direct his education, and preferable to any, excepting yourself and Marcus Tullius, in eloquence and urbanity.

*Cæsar.* Cato is so great, that whoever is greater must be the happiest and first of men.

*Lucullus.* That any such be still existing, O Julius, ought to excite no groan from the breast of a Roman citizen. But perhaps I wrong you ; perhaps your mind was forced reluctantly back again, on your past animosities and contests in the Senate.

*Cæsar.* I revere him, but cannot love him.

*Lucullus.* Then, Caius Julius, you groaned with reason ; and I would pity rather than reprove you.

On the ceiling at which you are looking, there is no

gilding, and little painting—a mere trellis of vines bearing grapes, and the heads, shoulders, and arms rising from the cornice only, of boys and girls climbing up to steal them, and scrambling for them: nothing overhead; no giants tumbling down, no Jupiter thundering, no Mars and Venus caught at mid-day, no river-gods pouring out their urns upon us; for, as I think nothing so insipid as a flat ceiling, I think nothing so absurd as a storied one. Before I was aware, and without my participation, the painter had adorned that of my bed-chamber with a golden shower, bursting from varied and irradiated clouds. On my expostulation, his excuse was that he knew the Danaë of Scopas, in a recumbent posture, was to occupy the centre of the room. The walls, behind the tapestry and pictures, are quite rough. In forty-three days the whole fabric was put together and habitable.

The wine has probably lost its freshness: will you try some other?

*Cæsar.* Its temperature is exact; its flavour exquisite. Latterly I have never sat long after dinner, and am curious to pass through the other apartments, if you will trust me.

*Lucullus.* I attend you.

*Cæsar.* Lucullus, who is here? What figure is that on the poop of the vessel? Can it be——

*Lucullus.* The subject was dictated by myself; you gave it.

*Cæsar.* Oh how beautifully is the water painted! How vividly the sun strikes against the snows on Taurus! The grey temples and pier-head of Tarsus catch it differently, and the monumental mound on the left is half in shade. In the countenance of those pirates I did not observe such

diversity, nor that any boy pulled his father back: I did not indeed mark them or notice them at all.

*Lucullus.* The painter in this fresco, the last work finished, had dissatisfied me in one particular. "That beautiful young face," said I, "appears not to threaten death."

"Lucius," he replied, "if one muscle were moved it were not Cæsar's: beside, he said it jokingly, though resolved."

"I am contented with your apology, Antipho; but what are you doing now? for you never lay down or suspend your pencil, let who will talk and argue. The lines of that smaller face in the distance are the same."

"Not the same," replied he, "nor very different: it smiles, as surely the goddess must have done at the first heroic act of her descendant."

*Cæsar.* In her exultation and impatience to press forward she seems to forget that she is standing at the extremity of the shell, which rises up behind out of the water; and she takes no notice of the terror on the countenance of this Cupid who would detain her, nor of this who is flying off and looking back. The reflection of the shell has given a warmer hue below the knee; a long streak of yellow light in the horizon is on the level of her bosom, some of her hair is almost lost in it; above her head on every side is the pure azure of the heavens.

Oh! and you would not have shown me this? You, among whose primary studies is the most perfect satisfaction of your guests!

*Lucullus.* In the next apartment are seven or eight other pictures from our history.

There are no more: what do you look for?

*Cæsar.* I find not among the rest any descriptive of

your own exploits. Ah, Lucullus! there is no surer way of making them remembered.

This, I presume by the harps in the two corners, is the music-room.

*Lucullus.* No, indeed; nor can I be said to have one here; for I love best the music of a single instrument, and listen to it willingly at all times, but most willingly while I am reading. At such seasons a voice or even a whisper disturbs me; but music refreshes my brain when I have read long, and strengthens it from the beginning. I find also that if I write anything in poetry (a youthful propensity still remaining), it gives rapidity and variety and brightness to my ideas. On ceasing, I command a fresh measure and instrument, or another voice; which is to the mind like a change of posture, or of air to the body. My health is benefited by the gentle play thus opened to the most delicate of the fibres.

*Cæsar.* Let me augur that a disorder so tractable may be soon removed. What is it thought to be?

*Lucullus.* I am inclined to think, and my physician did not long attempt to persuade me of the contrary, that the ancient realms of *Æetes* have supplied me with some other plants than the cherry, and such as I should be sorry to see domesticated here in Italy.

*Cæsar.* The gods forbid! Anticipate better things! The reason of Lucullus is stronger than the medicaments of *Mithridates*; but why not use them too? Let nothing be neglected. You may reasonably hope for many years of life: your mother still enjoys it.

*Lucullus.* To stand upon one's guard against Death exasperates her malice and protracts our sufferings.

*Cæsar.* Rightly and gravely said: but your country at this time cannot do well without you.



*Lucullus.* The bowl of milk, which to-day is presented to me, will shortly be presented to my Manes.

*Cæsar.* Do you suspect the hand?

*Lucullus.* I will not suspect a Roman: let us converse no more about it:

*Cæsar.* It is the only subject on which I am resolved never to think, as relates to myself. Life may concern us, death not; for in death we neither can act nor reason, we neither can persuade nor command; and our statues are worth more than we are, let them be but wax.

*Lucullus.* From being for ever in action, for ever in contention, and from excelling in them all other mortals, what advantage derive we? I would not ask what satisfaction, what glory? The insects have more activity than ourselves, the beasts more strength, even inert matter more firmness and stability; the gods alone more goodness. To the exercise of this every country lies open; and neither I eastward nor you westward have found any exhausted by contests for it.

Must we give men blows because they will not look at us? or chain them to make them hold the balance even?

Do not expect to be acknowledged for what you are, much less for what you would be; since no one can well measure a great man but upon the bier. There was a time when the most ardent friend to Alexander of Macedon would have embraced the partisan for his enthusiasm, who should have compared him with Alexander of Pheræ. It must have been at a splendid feast, and late at it, when Scipio should have been raised to an equality with Romulus, or Cato with Curius. It has been whispered in my ear, after a speech of Cicero, "If he goes on so, he will tread down the sandal of Marcus Antonius in the long run,

and perhaps leave Hortensius behind." Officers of mine, speaking about you, have exclaimed with admiration, "He fights like Cinna." Think, Caius Julius (for you have been instructed to think both as a poet and as a philosopher), that among the hundred hands of Ambition, to whom we may attribute them more properly than to Briareus, there is not one which holds anything firmly. In the precipitancy of her course, what appears great is small, and what appears small is great. Our estimate of men is apt to be as inaccurate and inexact as that of things, or more. Wishing to have all on our side, we often leave those we should keep by us, run after those we should avoid, and call importunately on others who sit quiet and will not come. We cannot at once catch the applause of the vulgar and expect the approbation of the wise. What are parties? Do men really great ever enter into them? Are they not ball-courts, where ragged adventurers strip and strive, and where dissolute youths abuse one another, and challenge and game and wager? If you and I cannot quite divest ourselves of infirmities and passions, let us think however that there is enough in us to be divided into two portions, and let us keep the upper undisturbed and pure. A part of Olympus itself lies in dreariness and in clouds, variable and stormy; but it is not the highest: there the gods govern. Your soul is large enough to embrace your country: all other affection is for less objects, and less men are capable of it. Abandon, O Cæsar! such thoughts and wishes as now agitate and propel you: leave them to mere men of the marsh, to fat hearts and miry intellects. Fortunate may we call ourselves to have been born in an age so productive of eloquence, so rich in erudition. Neither of us would be excluded, or hooted at, on canvassing for these honours. He who can think

dispassionately and deeply as I do, is great as I am ; none other. But his opinions are at freedom to diverge from mine, as mine are from his ; and indeed, on recollection, I never loved those most who thought with me, but those rather who deemed my sentiments worth discussion, and who corrected me with frankness and affability.

*Cæsar.* Lucullus, you perhaps have taken the wiser and better part, certainly the pleasanter. I cannot argue with you : I would gladly hear one who could, but you again more gladly. I should think unworthily of you if I thought you capable of yielding or receding. I do not even ask you to keep our conversation long a secret, so greatly does it preponderate in your favour ; so much more of gentleness, of eloquence, and of argument. I came hither with one soldier, avoiding the cities, and sleeping at the villa of a confidential friend. To-night I sleep in yours, and, if your dinner does not disturb me, shall sleep soundly. You go early to rest I know.

*Lucullus.* Not, however, by daylight. Be assured, Caius Julius, that greatly as your discourse afflicts me, no part of it shall escape my lips. If you approach the city with arms, with arms I meet you ; then your denouncer and enemy, at present your host and confidant.

*Cæsar.* I shall conquer you.

*Lucullus.* That smile would cease upon it : you sigh already.

*Cæsar.* Yes, Lucullus, if I am oppressed I shall overcome my oppressor : I know my army and myself. A sigh escaped me, and many more will follow ; but one transport will rise amid them, when, vanquisher of my enemies and avenger of my dignity, I press again the hand of Lucullus, mindful of this day.

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## EPICURUS, LEONTION, AND TERNISSA.

[The philosopher discourses, sometimes playfully, sometimes seriously, with his girl-pupils—the playful passages being by far the least happy. This was Landor's own favourite among the *Conversations*. He desired to walk “with Epicurus on the right hand and Epictetus on the left;” and he has here placed his own mature philosophy in the mouth of Epicurus.]

*Ternissa.* The broad and billowy summits of yon monstrous trees, one would imagine, were made for the storms to rest upon when they are tired of raving. And what bark! It occurs to me, Epicurus, that I have rarely seen climbing plants attach themselves to these trees, as they do to the oak, the maple, the beech, and others.

*Leontion.* If your remark be true, perhaps the resinous are not embraced by them so frequently because they dislike the odour of the resin, or some other property of the juices; for they, too, have their affections and antipathies no less than countries and their climes.

*Ternissa.* For shame! what would you with me?

*Epicurus.* I would not interrupt you while you were speaking, nor while Leontion was replying; this is against my rules and practice. Having now ended, kiss me, Ternissa!

*Ternissa.* Impudent man! in the name of Pallas, why should I kiss you?

*Epicurus.* Because you expressed hatred.

*Ternissa.* Do we kiss when we hate?

*Epicurus.* There is no better end of hating. The sentiment should not exist one moment; and if the hater gives

a kiss on being ordered to do it, even to a tree or a stone, that tree or stone becomes the monument of a fault extinct.

*Ternissa.* I promise you I never will hate a tree again.

*Epicurus.* I told you so.

*Leontion.* Nevertheless, I suspect, my Ternissa, you will often be surprised into it. I was very near saying, "I hate these rude square stones!" Why did you leave them here, Epicurus?

*Epicurus.* It is true, they are the greater part square, and seem to have been cut out in ancient times for plinths and columns; they are also rude. Removing the smaller, that I might plant violets and cyclamens and convolvuluses and strawberries, and such other herbs as grow willingly in dry places, I left a few of these for seats, a few for tables and for couches.

*Leontion.* Delectable couches!

*Epicurus.* Laugh as you may, they will become so when they are covered with moss and ivy, and those other two sweet plants whose names I do not remember to have found in any ancient treatise, but which I fancy I have heard Theophrastus call "Leontion" and "Ternissa."

*Ternissa.* The bold, insidious, false creature!

*Epicurus.* What is that volume, may I venture to ask, Leontion? Why do you blush?

*Leontion.* I do not blush about it.

*Epicurus.* You are offended, then, my dear girl.

*Leontion.* No, nor offended. I will tell you presently what it contains. Account to me first for your choice of so strange a place to walk in: a broad ridge, the summit and one side barren, the other a wood of rose-laurels impossible to penetrate. The worst of all is, we can see nothing of the city or the Parthenon, unless from the very top.



*Epicurus.* The place commands, in my opinion, a most perfect view.

*Leontion.* Of what, pray ?

*Epicurus.* Of itself ; seeming to indicate that we, Leontion, who philosophise, should do the same.

*Leontion.* Go on, go on ! say what you please : I will not hate anything yet. Why have you torn up by the root all these little mountain ash-trees ? This is the season of their beauty : come, Ternissa, let us make ourselves necklaces and armlets, such as may captivate old Sylvanus and Pan ; you shall have your choice. But why have you torn them up ?

*Epicurus.* On the contrary, they were brought hither this morning. Sosimenes is spending large sums of money on an olive-ground, and has uprooted some hundreds of them, of all ages and sizes. I shall cover the rougher part of the hill with them, setting the clematis and vine and honeysuckle against them, to unite them.

*Ternissa.* Oh, what a pleasant thing it is to walk in the green light of the vine trees, and to breathe the sweet odour of their invisible flowers !

*Epicurus.* The scent of them is so delicate that it requires a sigh to inhale it ; and this, being accompanied and followed by enjoyment, renders the fragrance so exquisite. Ternissa, it is this, my sweet friend, that made you remember the green light of the foliage, and think of the invisible flowers as you would of some blessing from heaven.

*Ternissa.* I see feathers flying at certain distances just above the middle of the promontory : what can they mean ?

*Epicurus.* Cannot you imagine them to be the feathers from the wings of Zethes and Caläis, who came hither out of Thrace to behold the favourite haunts of their mother

Oreithyia? From the precipice that hangs over the sea a few paces from the pinasters she is reported to have been carried off by Boreas; and these remains of the primeval forest have always been held sacred on that belief.

*Leontion.* The story is an idle one.

*Ternissa.* O no, Leontion! the story is very true.

*Leontion.* Indeed!

*Ternissa.* I have heard not only odes, but sacred and most ancient hymns upon it; and the voice of Boreas is often audible here, and the screams of Oreithyia.

*Leontion.* The feathers, then, really may belong to Caläis and Zethes.

*Ternissa.* I don't believe it; the winds would have carried them away.

*Leontion.* The gods, to manifest their power, as they often do by miracles, could as easily fix a feather eternally on the most tempestuous promontory, as the mark of their feet upon the flint.

*Ternissa.* They could indeed; but we know the one to a certainty, and have no such authority for the other. I have seen these pinasters from the extremity of the Piræus, and have heard mention of the altar raised to Boreas: where is it?

*Epicurus.* As it stands in the centre of the platform, we cannot see it from hence; there is the only piece of level ground in the place.

*Leontion.* Ternissa intends the altar to prove the truth of the story.

*Epicurus.* Ternissa is slow to admit that even the young can deceive, much less the old; the gay, much less the serious.

*Leontion.* It is as wise to moderate our belief as our desires.

*Epicurus.* Some minds require much belief, some thrive on little. Rather an exuberance of it is feminine and beautiful. It acts differently on different hearts; it troubles some, it consoles others; in the generous it is the nurse of tenderness and kindness, of heroism and self-devotion; in the ungenerous it fosters pride, impatience of contradiction and appeal, and, like some waters, what it finds a dry stick or hollow straw, it leaves a stone.

*Ternissa.* We want it chiefly to make the way of death an easy one.

*Epicurus.* There is no easy path leading out of life, and few are the easy ones that lie within it. I would adorn and smoothen the declivity, and make my residence as commodious as its situation and dimensions may allow; but principally I would cast underfoot the empty fear of death.

*Ternissa.* Oh! how can you?

*Epicurus.* By many arguments already laid down: then by thinking that some perhaps, in almost every age, have been timid and delicate as Ternissa; and yet have slept soundly, have felt no parent's or friend's tear upon their faces, no throb against their breasts: in short, have been in the calmest of all possible conditions, while those around were in the most deplorable and desperate.

*Ternissa.* It would pain me to die, if it were only at the idea that any one I love would grieve too much for me.

*Epicurus.* Let the loss of our friends be our only grief, and the apprehension of displeasing them our only fear.

*Leontion.* No apostrophes! no interjections! Your argument was unsound; your means futile.

*Epicurus.* Tell me, then, whether the horse of a rider on the road should not be spurred forward if he started at a shadow.

*Leontion.* Yes.

*Epicurus.* I thought so : it would however be better to guide him quietly up to it, and to show him that it was one. Death is less than a shadow : it represents nothing, even imperfectly.

*Leontion.* Then at the best what is it ? why care about it, think about it, or remind us that it must befall us ? Would you take the same trouble, when you see my hair entwined with ivy, to make me remember that, although the leaves are green and pliable, the stem is fragile and rough, and that before I go to bed I shall have many knots and entanglements to extricate ? Let me have them ; but let me not hear of them until the time is come.

*Epicurus.* I would never think of death as an embarrassment, but as a blessing.

*Ternissa.* How ? a blessing ?

*Epicurus.* What, if it makes our enemies cease to hate us ? what, if it makes our friends love us the more ?

*Leontion.* Us ? According to your doctrine we shall not exist at all.

*Epicurus.* I spoke of that which is consolatory while we are here, and of that which in plain reason ought to render us contented to stay no longer. You, Leontion, would make others better ; and better they certainly will be, when their hostilities languish in an empty field, and their rancour is tired with treading upon dust. The generous affections stir about us at the dreary hour of death, as the blossoms of the Median apple swell and diffuse their fragrance in the cold.

*Ternissa.* I cannot bear to think of passing the Styx, lest Charon should touch me ; he is so old and wilful, so cross and ugly.

*Epicurus.* Ternissa ! Ternissa ! I would accompany you thither, and stand between. Would you not too, Leontion ?

*Leontion.* I don't know.

*Ternissa.* Oh ! that we could go together !

*Leontion.* Indeed !

*Ternissa.* All three, I mean—I said—or was going to say it. How ill-natured you are, Leontion, to misinterpret me ; I could almost cry.

*Leontion.* Do not, do not, Ternissa ! Should that tear drop from your eyelash you would look less beautiful.

*Epicurus.* If it is well to conquer a world, it is better to conquer two.

*Ternissa.* That is what Alexander of Macedon wept because he could not accomplish.

*Epicurus.* Ternissa ! we three can accomplish it ; or any one of us.

*Ternissa.* How ? pray !

*Epicurus.* We can conquer this world and the next ; for you will have another, and nothing should be refused you.

*Ternissa.* The next by piety : but this, in what manner ?

*Epicurus.* By indifference to all who are indifferent to us ; by taking joyfully the benefit that comes spontaneously ; by wishing no more intensely for what is a hair's breadth beyond our reach than for a draught of water from the Ganges ; and by fearing nothing in another life.

*Ternissa.* This, O Epicurus ! is the grand impossibility.

*Epicurus.* Do you believe the gods to be as benevolent and good as you are ? or do you not ?

*Ternissa.* Much kinder, much better in every way.

*Epicurus.* Would you kill or hurt the sparrow that you keep in your little dressing-room with a string around the leg, because he hath flown where you did not wish him to fly ?

*Ternissa.* No ! it would be cruel ; the string about the leg of so little and weak a creature is enough.



*Epicurus.* You think so ; I think so ; God thinks so. This I may say confidently ; for whenever there is a sentiment in which strict justice and pure benevolence unite, it must be his.

*Ternissa.* O Epicurus ! when you speak thus——

*Leontion.* Well, Ternissa, what then ?

*Ternissa.* When Epicurus teaches us such sentiments as these, I am grieved that he has not so great an authority with the Athenians as some others have.

*Leontion.* You will grieve more, I suspect, my Ternissa, when he possesses that authority.

*Ternissa.* What will he do ?

*Leontion.* Why turn pale ? I am not about to answer that he will forget or leave you. No ; but the voice comes deepest from the sepulchre, and a great name hath its root in the dead body. If you invited a company to a feast, you might as well place round the table live sheep and oxen and vases of fish and cages of quails, as you would invite a company of friendly hearers to the philosopher who is yet living. One would imagine that the iris of our intellectual eye were lessened by the glory of his presence, and that, like eastern kings, he could be looked at near only when his limbs are stiff, by waxlight, in close curtains.

*Epicurus.* One of whom we know little leaves us a ring or other token of remembrance, and we express a sense of pleasure and of gratitude ; one of whom we know nothing writes a book, the contents of which might (if we would let them) have done us more good and might have given us more pleasure, and we revile him for it. The book may do what the legacy cannot ; it may be pleasurable and serviceable to others as well as ourselves : we would hinder this too. In fact, all other love is extinguished by self-love : beneficence, humanity, justice, philosophy, sink under it.

While we insist that we are looking for Truth, we commit a falsehood. It never was the first object with any one, and with few the second.

Feed unto replenishment your quieter fancies, my sweetest little Ternissa ! and let the gods, both youthful and aged, both gentle and boisterous, administer to them hourly on these sunny downs : what can they do better ?

*Leontion.* But those feathers, Ternissa, what god's may they be ? since you will not pick them up, nor restore them to Caläis nor to Zethes.

*Ternissa.* I do not think they belong to any god whatever ; and shall never be persuaded of it unless Epicurus says it is so.

*Leontion.* O unbelieving creature ! do you reason against the immortals ?

*Ternissa.* It was yourself who doubted, or appeared to doubt, the flight of Oreithyia. By admitting too much we endanger our religion. Beside, I think I discern some upright stakes at equal distances, and am pretty sure the feathers are tied to them by long strings.

*Epicurus.* You have guessed the truth.

*Ternissa.* Of what use are they there ?

*Epicurus.* If you have ever seen the foot of a statue broken off just below the ankle, you have then, Leontion and Ternissa, seen the form of the ground about us. The lower extremities of it are divided into small ridges, as you will perceive if you look around ; and these are covered with corn, olives, and vines. At the upper part, where cultivation ceases, and where those sheep and goats are grazing, begins my purchase. The ground rises gradually unto near the summit, where it grows somewhat steep, and terminates in a precipice. Across the middle I have traced a line, denoted by those feathers, from one dingle

to the other; the two terminations of my intended garden. The distance is nearly a thousand paces, and the path, perfectly on a level, will be two paces broad, so that I may walk between you; but another could not join us conveniently. From this there will be several circuitous and spiral, leading by the easiest ascent to the summit; and several more, to the road along the cultivation underneath: here will, however, be but one entrance. Among the projecting fragments and the massive stones yet standing of the boundary-wall, which old pomegranates imperfectly defend, and which my neighbour has guarded more effectively against invasion, there are hillocks of crumbling mould, covered in some places with a variety of moss; in others are elevated tufts, or dim labyrinths of eglantine.

*Ternissa.* Where will you place the statues? for undoubtedly you must have some.

*Epicurus.* I will have some models for statues. Pygmalion prayed the gods to give life to the image he adored: I will not pray them to give marble to mine. Never may I lay my wet cheek upon the foot under which is inscribed the name of Leontion or Ternissa!

*Leontion.* Do not make us melancholy; never let us think that the time can come when we shall lose our friends. Glory, literature, philosophy have this advantage over friendship: remove one object from them, and others fill the void; remove one from friendship, one only, and not the earth nor the universality of worlds, no, nor the intellect that soars above and comprehends them, can replace it!

*Epicurus.* Dear Leontion! always amiable, always graceful! How lovely do you now appear to me! what beauteous action accompanied your words!

*Leontion.* I used none whatever.

*Epicurus.* That white arm was then, as it is now, over

the shoulder of Ternissa ; and her breath imparted a fresh bloom to your cheek, a new music to your voice. No friendship is so cordial or so delicious as that of girl for girl ; no hatred so intense and immovable as that of woman for woman. In youth you love one above the others of your sex ; in riper age you hate all, more or less, in proportion to similarity of accomplishments and pursuits—which sometimes (I wish it were oftener) are bonds of union to man. In us you more easily pardon faults than excellences in each other. *Your* tempers are such, my beloved scholars, that even this truth does not ruffle them ; and such is your affection, that I look with confidence to its unabated ardour at twenty.

*Leontion.* Oh, then I am to love Ternissa almost fifteen months !

*Ternissa.* And I am destined to survive the loss of it three months above four years !

*Epicurus.* Incomparable creatures ! may it be eternal ! In loving ye shall follow no example ; ye shall step securely over the iron rule laid down for others by the Destinies, and *you* forever be Leontion, and *you* Ternissa.

*Leontion.* Then indeed we should not want statues.

*Ternissa.* But men, who are vainer creatures, would be good for nothing without them : they must be flattered, even by the stones.

*Epicurus.* Very true. Neither the higher arts nor the civic virtues can flourish extensively without the statues of illustrious men. But gardens are not the places for them. Sparrows wooing on the general's truncheon (unless he be such a general as one of ours in the last war), and snails besliming the emblems of the poet, do not remind us worthily of their characters. Porticos are their proper situations, and those the most frequented. Even there they may lose

all honour and distinction, whether from the thoughtlessness of magistrates or from the malignity of rivals. Our own city, the least exposed of any to the effects of either, presents us a disheartening example. When the Thebans in their jealousy condemned Pindar to the payment of a fine for having praised the Athenians too highly, our citizens erected a statue of bronze to him.

*Leontion.* Jealousy of Athens made the Thebans fine him; and jealousy of Thebes made the Athenians thus record it.

*Epicurus.* And jealousy of Pindar, I suspect, made some poet persuade the archons to render the distinction a vile and worthless one, by placing his effigy near a king's—one Evagoras of Cyprus.

*Ternissa.* Evagoras, I think I remember to have read in the inscription, was rewarded in this manner for his reception of Conon, defeated by the Lacedemonians.

*Epicurus.* Gratitude was due to him, and some such memorial to record it. External reverence should be paid unsparingly to the higher magistrates of every country who perform their offices exemplarily; yet they are not on this account to be placed in the same degree with men of primary genius. They never exalt the human race, and rarely benefit it; and their benefits are local and transitory, while those of a great writer are universal and eternal.

If the gods did indeed bestow on us a portion of their fire, they seem to have lighted it in sport and left it; the harder task and the nobler is performed by that genius who raises it clear and glowing from its embers, and makes it applicable to the purposes that dignify or delight our nature. I have ever said, "Reverence the rulers." Let, then, his image stand; but stand apart from Pindar's. Pallas and Jove! defend me from being carried down the stream of



time among a shoal of royalets, and the rootless weeds they are hatched on !

*Ternissa.* So much piety would deserve the exemption, even though your writings did not hold out the decree.

*Leontion.* Child, the compliment is ill turned : if you are ironical, as you must be on the piety of Epicurus. Atticism requires that you should continue to be so, at least to the end of the sentence.

*Ternissa.* Irony is my abhorrence. Epicurus may appear less pious than some others, but I am certain he is more ; otherwise the gods would never have given him——

*Leontion.* What ? what ? let us hear !

*Ternissa.* Leontion !

*Leontion.* Silly girl ! Were there any hibiscus or broom growing near at hand, I would send him away and whip you.

*Epicurus.* There is fern, which is better.

*Leontion.* I was not speaking to you : but now you shall have something to answer for yourself. Although you admit no statues in the country, you might at least, methinks, have discovered a retirement with a fountain in it : here I see not even a spring.

*Epicurus.* Fountain I can hardly say there is ; but on the left there is a long crevice or chasm, which we have never yet visited, and which we cannot discern until we reach it. This is full of soft mould, very moist, and many high reeds and canes are growing there ; and the rock itself too drips with humidity along it, and is covered with more tufted moss and more variegated lichens. This crevice, with its windings and sinuosities, is about four hundred paces long, and in many parts eleven, twelve, thirteen feet wide, but generally six or seven. I shall plant it wholly with lilies of the valley, leaving the irises which occupy the

sides as well as the clefts, and also those other flowers of paler purple, from the autumnal cups of which we collect the saffron ; and forming a narrow path of such turf as I can find there, or rather following it as it creeps among the bays and hazels and sweet-briar, which had fallen at different times from the summit and are now grown old, with an infinity of primroses at the roots. There are nowhere twenty steps without a projection and a turn, nor in any ten together is the chasm of the same width or figure. Hence the ascent in its windings is easy and imperceptible quite to the termination, where the rocks are somewhat high and precipitous ; at the entrance they lose themselves in privet and elder, and you must make your way between them through the canes. Do not you remember where I carried you both across the muddy hollow in the foot-path ?

*Ternissa.* Leontion does.

*Epicurus.* That place is always wet ; not only in this month of Puanepsion, which we are beginning to-day, but in midsummer. The water that causes it comes out a little way above it, but originates from the crevice, which I will cover at top with rose-laurel and mountain-ash, with clematis and vine ; and I will intercept the little rill in its wandering, draw it from its concealment, and place it like Bacchus under the protection of the nymphs, who will smile upon it in its marble cradle, which at present I keep at home.

*Ternissa.* Leontion, why do you turn away your face ? have the nymphs smiled upon you in it ?

*Leontion.* I bathed in it once, if you must know, Ternissa ! Why now, Ternissa, why do you turn away yours ? have the nymphs frowned upon you for invading their secrets ?

*Ternissa.* Epicurus, you are in the right to bring it away from Athens, from under the eye of Pallas: she might be angry.

*Epicurus.* You approve of its removal then, my lovely friend?

*Ternissa.* Mightily. (*Aside.*) I wish it may break in pieces on the road.

*Epicurus.* What did you say?

*Ternissa.* I wish it were now on the road, that I might try whether it would hold me—I mean with my clothes on.

*Epicurus.* It would hold you, and one a span longer. I have another in the house; but it is not decorated with fauns and satyrs and foliage, like this.

*Leontion.* I remember putting my hand upon the frightful satyr's head, to leap in: it seems made for the purpose. But the sculptor needed not to place the naiad quite so near—he must have been a very impudent man; it is impossible to look for a moment at such a piece of workmanship.

*Ternissa.* For shame! Leontion!—why, what was it? I do not desire to know.

*Epicurus.* I don't remember it.

*Leontion.* Nor I neither; only the head.

*Epicurus.* I shall place the satyr toward the rock, that you may never see him, Ternissa.

*Ternissa.* Very right; he cannot turn round.

*Leontion.* The poor naiad had done it, in vain.

*Ternissa.* All these labourers will soon finish the plantation, if you superintend them, and are not appointed to some magistrature.

*Epicurus.* Those who govern us are pleased at seeing a philosopher out of the city, and more still at finding in a

season of scarcity forty poor citizens, who might become seditious, made happy and quiet by such employment.

Two evils, of almost equal weight, may befall the man of erudition: never to be listened to, and to be listened to always. Aware of these, I devote a large portion of my time and labours to the cultivation of such minds as flourish best in cities, where my garden at the gate, although smaller than this, we find sufficiently capacious. There I secure my listeners; here my thoughts and imaginations have their free natural current, and tarry or wander as the will invites: may it ever be among those dearest to me!—those whose hearts possess the rarest and divinest faculty, of retaining or forgetting at option what ought to be forgotten or retained.

*Leontion.* The whole ground then will be covered with trees and shrubs?

*Epicurus.* There are some protuberances in various parts of the eminence, which you do not perceive till you are upon them or above them. They are almost level at the top, and overgrown with fine grass; for they catch the better soil brought down in small quantities by the rains. These are to be left unplanted: so is the platform under the pinasters, whence there is a prospect of the city, the harbour, the isle of Salamis, and the territory of Megara. “What then!” cried Sosimenes, “you would hide from your view my young olives, and the whole length of the new wall I have been building at my own expense between us! and, when you might see at once the whole of Attica, you will hardly see more of it than I could buy.”

*Leontion.* I do not perceive the new wall, for which Sosimenes, no doubt, thinks himself another Pericles.

*Epicurus.* Those old junipers quite conceal it.

*Ternissa.* They look warm and sheltering; but I like

the rose-laurels much better : and what a thicket of them here is !

*Epicurus.* Leaving all the larger, I shall remove many thousands of them ; enough to border the greater part of the walk, intermixed with roses.

There is an infinity of other plants and flowers, or weeds as Sosimenes calls them, of which he has cleared his olive-yard, and which I shall adopt. Twenty of his slaves came in yesterday, laden with hyacinths and narcissuses, anemones and jonquils. "The curses of our vineyards," cried he, "and good neither for man nor beast. I have another estate infested with lilies of the valley : I should not wonder if you accepted these too."

"And with thanks," answered I.

The whole of his remark I could not collect : he turned aside, and (I believe) prayed. I only heard "Pallas"—"Father"—"sound mind"—"inoffensive man"—"good neighbour." As we walked together I perceived him looking grave, and I could not resist my inclination to smile as I turned my eyes toward him. He observed it, at first with unconcern, but by degrees some doubts arose within him, and he said, "Epicurus, you have been throwing away no less than half a talent on this sorry piece of mountain, and I fear you are about to waste as much in labour : for nothing was ever so terrible as the price we are obliged to pay the workman, since the conquest of Persia and the increase of luxury in our city. Under three obols none will do his day's work. But what, in the name of all the deities, could induce you to plant those roots, which other people dig up and throw away ?"

"I have been doing," said I, "the same thing my whole life through, Sosimenes !"

"How !" cried he ; "I never knew that."



"Those very doctrines," added I, "which others hate and extirpate, I inculcate and cherish. They bring no riches, and therefore are thought to bring no advantage; to me, they appear the more advantageous for that reason. They give us immediately what we solicit through the means of wealth. We toil for the wealth first; and then it remains to be proved whether we can purchase with it what we look for. Now, to carry our money to the market, and not to find in the market our money's worth, is great vexation; yet much greater has already preceded, in running up and down for it among so many competitors, and through so many thieves."

After a while he rejoined, "You really, then, have not overreached me?"

"In what, my friend?" said I.

"These roots," he answered, "may perhaps be good and saleable for some purpose. Shall you send them into Persia? or whither?"

"Sosimenes, I shall make love-potions of the flowers."

*Leontion.* O Epicurus! should it ever be known in Athens that they are good for this, you will not have, with all your fences of prunes and pomegranates, and precipices with briar upon them, a single root left under ground after the month of Elaphebolion.

*Epicurus.* It is not everyone that knows the preparation.

*Leontion.* Everybody will try it.

*Epicurus.* And you, too, Ternissa?

*Ternissa.* Will you teach me?

*Epicurus.* This, and anything else I know. We must walk together when they are in flower.

*Ternissa.* And can you teach me, then?

*Epicurus.* I teach by degrees.

*Leontion.* By very slow ones, Epicurus! I have no patience with you; tell us directly.

*Epicurus.* It is very material what kind of recipient you bring with you. Enchantresses use a brazen one; silver and gold are employed in other arts.

*Leontion.* I will bring any.

*Ternissa.* My mother has a fine golden one. She will lend it me; she allows me everything.

*Epicurus.* Leontion and Ternissa, those eyes of yours brighten at inquiry, as if they carried a light within them for a guidance.

*Leontion.* No flattery!

*Ternissa.* No flattery! Come, teach us!

*Epicurus.* Will you hear me through in silence?

*Leontion.* We promise.

*Epicurus.* Sweet girls! the calm pleasures, such as I hope you will ever find in your walks among these gardens, will improve your beauty, animate your discourse, and correct the little that may hereafter rise up for correction in your dispositions. The smiling ideas left in our bosoms from our infancy, that many plants are the favourites of the gods, and that others were even the objects of their love—having once been invested with the human form, beautiful and lively and happy as yourselves—give them an interest beyond the vision; yes, and a station—let me say it—on the vestibule of our affections. Resign your ingenuous hearts to simple pleasures; and there is none in man, where men are Attic, that will not follow and outstrip their movements.

*Ternissa.* O Epicurus!

*Epicurus.* What said Ternissa?

*Leontion.* Some of those anemones, I do think, must be still in blossom. Ternissa's golden cup is at home; but she

has brought with her a little vase for the filter—and has filled it to the brim.—Do not hide your head behind my shoulder, Ternissa ; no, nor in my lap.

*Epicurus.* Yes, there let it lie—the lovelier for that tendril of sunny brown hair upon it. How it falls and rises ! Which is the hair ? which the shadow ?

*Leontion.* Let the hair rest.

*Epicurus.* I must not, perhaps, clasp the shadow !

*Leontion.* You philosophers are fond of such unsubstantial things. Oh, you have taken my volume ! This is deceit.

You live so little in public, and entertain such a contempt for opinion, as to be both indifferent and ignorant what it is that people blame you for.

*Epicurus* I know what it is I should blame myself for, if I attended to them. Prove them to be wiser and more disinterested in their wisdom than I am, and I will then go down to them and listen to them. When I have well considered a thing, I deliver it—regardless of what those think who neither take the time nor possess the faculty of considering anything well, and who have always lived far remote from the scope of our speculations.

*Leontion.* In the volume you snatched away from me so slily, I have defended a position of yours which many philosophers turn into ridicule—namely, that politeness is among the virtues. I wish you yourself had spoken more at large upon the subject.

*Epicurus.* It is one upon which a lady is likely to display more ingenuity and discernment. If philosophers have ridiculed my sentiment, the reason is, it is among those virtues which in general they find most difficult to assume or counterfeit.

*Leontion.* Surely life runs on the smoother for this

equability and polish ; and the gratification it affords is more extensive than is afforded even by the highest virtue. Courage, on nearly all occasions, inflicts as much of evil as it imparts of good. It may be exerted in defence of our country, in defence of those who love us, in defence of the harmless and the helpless ; but those against whom it is thus exerted may possess an equal share of it. If they succeed, then manifestly the ill it produces is greater than the benefit ; if they succumb, it is nearly as great. For many of their adversaries are first killed and maimed, and many of their own kindred are left to lament the consequences of the aggression.

*Epicurus.* You have spoken first of courage, as that virtue which attracts your sex principally.

*Ternissa.* Not me ; I am always afraid of it. I love those best who can tell me the most things I never knew before, and who have patience with me, and look kindly while they teach me, and almost as if they were waiting for fresh questions. Now let me hear directly what you were about to say to Leontion.

*Epicurus.* I was proceeding to remark that temperance comes next ; and temperance has then its highest merit when it is the support of civility and politeness. So that I think I am right and equitable in attributing to politeness a distinguished rank, not among the ornaments of life, but among the virtues. And you, Leontion and Ternissa, will have leaned the more propensely toward this opinion, if you considered, as I am sure you did, that the peace and concord of families, friends, and cities are preserved by it ; in other terms, the harmony of the world.

*Ternissa.* Leontion spoke of courage, you of temperance ; the next great virtue, in the division made by the philosophers, is justice.

*Epicurus.* Temperance includes it ; for temperance is imperfect if it is only an abstinence from too much food, too much wine, too much conviviality or other luxury. It indicates every kind of forbearance. Justice is forbearance from what belongs to another. Giving to this one rightly what that one would hold wrongfully is justice in magistrature not in the abstract, and is only a part of its office. The perfectly temperate man is also the perfectly just man ; but the perfectly just man (as philosophers now define him) may not be the perfectly temperate one. I include the less in the greater.

*Leontion.* We hear of judges, and upright ones too, being immoderate eaters and drinkers.

*Epicurus.* The Lacedemonians are temperate in food and courageous in battle ; but men like these, if they existed in sufficient numbers, would devastate the universe. We alone, we Athenians, with less military skill perhaps, and certainly less rigid abstinence from voluptuousness and luxury, have set before it the only grand example of social government and of polished life. From us the seed is scattered ; from us flow the streams that irrigate it ; and ours are the hands, O Leontion, that collect it, cleanse it, deposit it, and convey and distribute it sound and weighty through every race and age. Exhausted as we are by war, we can do nothing better than lie down and doze while the weather is fine overhead, and dream (if we can) that we are affluent and free.

O sweet sea-air ! how bland art thou and refreshing ! Breathe upon Leontion ! breathe upon Ternissa ! bring them health and spirits and serenity, many springs and many summers, and when the vine-leaves have reddened and rustle under their feet !

These, my beloved girls, are the children of Eternity :



they played around Theseus and the beauteous Amazon ; they gave to Pallas the bloom of Venus, and to Venus the animation of Pallas. Is it not better to enjoy by the hour their soft, salubrious influence, than to catch by fits the rancid breath of demagogues ; than to swell and move under it without or against our will ; than to acquire the semblance of eloquence by the bitterness of passion, the tone of philosophy by disappointment, or the credit of prudence by distrust ? Can fortune, can industry, can desert itself, bestow on us anything we have not here ?

*Leontion.* And when shall those three meet ? The gods have never united them, knowing that men would put them asunder at the first appearance.

*Epicurus.* I am glad to leave the city as often as possible, full as it is of high and glorious reminiscences, and am inclined much rather to indulge in quieter scenes, whither the Graces and Friendship lead me. I would not contend even with men able to contend with me. You, Leontion, I see, think differently, and have composed at last your long-meditated work against the philosophy of Theophrastus.

*Leontion.* Why not ? he has been praised above his merits.

*Epicurus.* My Leontion ! you have inadvertently given me the reason and origin of all controversial writings. They flow not from a love of truth or a regard for science, but from envy and ill-will. Setting aside the evil of malignity—always hurtful to ourselves, not always to others—there is weakness in the argument you have adduced. When a writer is praised above his merits in his own times, he is certain of being estimated below them in the times succeeding. Paradox is dear to most people : it bears the appearance of originality, but is

usually the talent of the superficial, the preverse, and the obstinate.

Nothing is more gratifying than the attention you are bestowing on me, which you always apportion to the seriousness of my observations.

*Leontion.* I dislike Theophrastus for his affected contempt of your doctrines.

*Epicurus.* Unreasonably, for the contempt of them; reasonably, if affected. Good men may differ widely from me, and wiser ones misunderstand me; for, their wisdom having raised up to them schools of their own, they have not found leisure to converse with me; and from others they have received a partial and inexact report. My opinion is, that certain things are indifferent and unworthy of pursuit or attention, as lying beyond our research and almost our conjecture; which things the generality of philosophers (for the generality are speculative) deem of the first importance. Questions relating to them I answer evasively, or altogether decline. Again, there are modes of living which are suitable to some and unsuitable to others. What I myself follow and embrace, what I recommend to the studious, to the irritable, to the weak in health, would ill agree with the commonality of citizens. Yet my adversaries cry out, "Such is the opinion and practice of Epicurus!" For instance, I have never taken a wife, and never will take one; but he from among the mass, who should avow his imitation of my example, would act as wisely and more religiously in saying that he chose celibacy because Pallas had done the same.

*Leontion.* If Pallas had many such votaries she would soon have few citizens to supply them.

*Epicurus.* And extremely bad ones, if all followed me in retiring from the offices of magistracy and of war. Having

seen that the most sensible men are the most unhappy, I could not but examine the causes of it; and, finding that the same sensibility to which they are indebted for the activity of their intellect is also the restless mover of their jealousy and ambition, I would lead them aside from whatever operates upon these, and throw under their feet the terrors their imagination has created. My philosophy is not for the populace nor for the proud: the ferocious will never attain it; the gentle will embrace it, but will not call it mine. I do not desire that they should: let them rest their heads upon that part of the pillow which they find the softest, and enjoy their own dreams unbroken.

*Leontion.* The old are all against you, Epicurus, the name of pleasure is an affront to them: they know no other kind of it than that which has flowered and seeded, and of which the withered stems have indeed a rueful look.

*Epicurus.* Unhappily the aged are retentive of long-acquired maxims, and insensible to new impressions, whether from fancy or from truth: in fact, their eyes blend the two together. Well might the poet tell us—

“Fewer the gifts that gnarled Age presents  
To elegantly-handed Infancy,  
Than elegantly-handed Infancy  
Presents to gnarled Age. From both they drop;  
The middle course of life receives them all,  
Save the light few that laughing Youth runs off with,  
Unvalued as a mistress or a flower.”

*Leontion.* Since, in obedience to your institutions, O Epicurus, I must not say I am angry, I am offended at least with Theophrastus for having so misrepresented your opinions, on the necessity of keeping the mind composed and tranquil, and remote from every object and every

sentiment by which a painful sympathy may be excited. In order to display his elegance of language, he runs wherever he can lay a censure on you, whether he believes in its equity or not.

*Epicurus.* This is the case with all eloquent men, and all disputants. Truth neither warms nor elevates them, neither obtains for them profit nor applause.

*Ternissa.* I have heard wise remarks very often and very warmly praised.

*Epicurus.* Not for the truth in them, but for the grace, or because they touched the spring of some preconception or some passion. Man is a hater of truth, a lover of fiction.

Theophrastus is a writer of many acquirements and some shrewdness, usually judicious, often somewhat witty, always elegant; his thoughts are never confused, his sentences are never incomprehensible. If Aristoteles thought more highly of him than his due, surely you ought not to censure Theophrastus with severity on the supposition of his rating me below mine; unless you argue that a slight error in a short sum is less pardonable than in a longer. Had Aristoteles been living, and had he given the same opinion of me, your friendship and perhaps my self-love might have been wounded; for, if on one occasion he spoke too favourably, he never spoke unfavourably but with justice. This is among the indications of orderly and elevated minds; and here stands the barrier that separates them from the common and the waste. Is a man to be angry because an infant is fretful? Is a philosopher to unpack and throw away his philosophy, because an idiot has tried to overturn it on the road, and has pursued it with gibes and ribaldry?

*Leontion.* Theophrastus would persuade us that,

according to your system, we not only should decline the succour of the wretched, but avoid the sympathies that poets and historians would awaken in us. Probably for the sake of introducing some idle verses, written by a friend of his, he says that, following the guidance of Epicurus, we should altogether shun the theatre ; and not only when *Prometheus* and *Œdipus* and *Philoctetes* are introduced, but even when generous and kindly sentiments are predominant, if they partake of that tenderness which belongs to pity. I know not what Thracian lord recovers his daughter from her ravisher ; such are among the words they exchange :—

*Father.* Insects that dwell in rotten reeds, inert  
 Upon the surface of a stream or pool,  
 Then rush into the air on meshy vans,  
 Are not so different in their varying lives  
 As we are.—Oh ! what father on this earth,  
 Holding his child's cool cheek within his palms  
 And kissing his fair front, would wish him man ?—  
 Inheritor of wants and jealousies,  
 Of labour, of ambition, of distress,  
 And, cruellest of all the passions, lust.  
 Who that beholds me, persecuted, scorned,  
 A wanderer, e'er could think what friends were mine,  
 How numerous, how devoted ? with what glee  
 Smiled my old house, with what acclaim my courts  
 Rang from without whene'er my war-horse neighed ?

*Daughter.* Thy fortieth birthday is not shouted yet  
 By the young peasantry, with rural gifts  
 And nightly fires along the pointed hills,  
 Yet do thy temples glitter with grey hair  
 Scattered not thinly : ah, what sudden change !  
 Only thy voice and heart remain the same :  
 No ! that voice trembles, and that heart (I feel),  
 While it would comfort and console me, breaks.



*Epicurus.* I would never close my bosom against the feelings of humanity ; but I would calmly and well consider by what conduct of life they may enter it with the least importunity and violence. A consciousness that we have promoted the happiness of others, to the uttermost of our power, is certain not only to meet them at the threshold, but to bring them along with us, and to render them accurate and faithful prompters, when we bend perplexedly over the problem of evil figured by the tragedians. If there were more of pain than of pleasure in the exhibitions of the dramatist, no man in his senses would attend them twice. All the imitative arts have delight for the principal object : the first of these is poetry ; the highest of poetry is tragic.

*Leontion.* The epic has been called so.

*Epicurus.* Improperly ; for the epic has much more in it of what is prosaic. Its magnitude is no argument. An Egyptian pyramid contains more materials than an Ionic temple, but requires less contrivance, and exhibits less beauty of design. My simile is yet a defective one ; for a tragedy must be carried on with an unbroken interest, and, undecorated by loose foliage or fantastic branches, it must rise, like the palm-tree, with a lofty unity. On these matters I am unable to argue at large, or perhaps correctly ; on those, however, which I have studied and treated, my terms are so explicit and clear, that Theophrastus can never have misunderstood them. Let me recall to your attention but two axioms.

Abstinence from low pleasures is the only means of meriting or of obtaining the higher.

Kindness in ourselves is the honey that blunts the sting of unkindness in another.

*Leontion.* Explain to me then, O Epicurus, why we suffer so much from ingratitude.

*Epicurus.* We fancy we suffer from ingratitude, while in reality we suffer from self-love. Passion weeps while she says, "I did not deserve this from him;" Reason, while she says it, smoothens her brow at the clear fountain of the heart. Permit me also, like Theophrastus, to borrow a few words from a poet.

*Ternissa.* Borrow as many such as any one will entrust to you, and may Hermes prosper your commerce! Leontion may go to the theatre then; for she loves it.

*Epicurus.* Girls! be the bosom friends of *Antigonè* and *Ismene*; and you shall enter the wood of the Eumenides without shuddering, and leave it without the trace of a tear. Never did you appear so graceful to me, O Ternissa—no, not even after this walk do you—as when I saw you blow a fly from the forehead of *Philoctetes* in the propylæa. The wing, with which Sophocles and the statuary represent him, to drive away the summer insects in his agony, had wearied his flaccid arm, hanging down beside him.

*Ternissa.* Do you imagine, then, I thought him a living man?

*Epicurus.* The sentiment was both more delicate and more august from being indistinct. You would have done it, even if he *had* been a living man; even if he could have clasped you in his arms, imploring the deities to resemble you in gentleness, you would have done it.

*Ternissa.* He looked so abandoned by all, and so heroic, yet so feeble and so helpless! I did not think of turning around to see if any one was near me; or else, perhaps——

*Epicurus.* If you could have thought of looking around, you would no longer have been Ternissa. The gods would have transformed you for it into some tree.

*Leontion.* And Epicurus had been walking under it this day, perhaps.

*Epicurus.* With Leontion, the partner of his sentiments. But the walk would have been earlier or later than the present hour; since the middle of the day, like the middle of certain fruits, is good for nothing.

*Leontion.* For dinner, surely?

*Epicurus.* Dinner is a less gratification to me than to many: I dine alone.

*Ternissa.* Why?

*Epicurus.* To avoid the noise, the heat, and the intermixture both of odours and of occupations. I cannot bear the indecency of speaking with a mouth in which there is food. I careen my body (since it is always in want of repair) in as unobstructed a space as I can, and I lie down and sleep awhile when the work is over.

*Leontion.* Epicurus! although it would be very interesting, no doubt, to hear more of what you do after dinner—(*aside to him*) now don't smile: I shall never forgive you if you say a single word—yet I would rather hear a little about the theatre, and whether you think at last that women should frequent it; for you have often said the contrary.

*Epicurus.* I think they should visit it rarely; not because it excites their affections, but because it deadens them. To me nothing is so odious as to be at once among the rabble and among the heroes, and, while I am receiving into my heart the most exquisite of human sensations, to feel upon my shoulder the hand of some inattentive and insensible young officer.

*Leontion.* Oh very bad indeed! horrible!

*Ternissa.* You quite fire at the idea.

*Leontion.* Not I: I don't care about it.

*Ternissa.* Not about what is very bad indeed? quite horrible?

*Leontion.* I seldom go thither.

*Epicurus.* The theatre is delightful when we erect it in our own house or arbour, and when there is but one spectator.

*Leontion.* You must lose the illusion in great part, if you only read the tragedy, which I fancy to be your meaning.

*Epicurus.* I lose the less of it. Do not imagine that the illusion is, or can be, or ought to be, complete. If it were possible, no Phalaris or Perillus could devise a crueller torture. Here are two imitations: first, the poet's of the sufferer; secondly, the actor's of both: poetry is superinduced. No man in pain ever uttered the better part of the language used by Sophocles. We admit it, and willingly, and are at least as much illuded by it as by anything else we hear or see upon the stage. Poets and statuaries and painters give us an adorned imitation of the object, so skilfully treated that we receive it for a correct one. This is the only illusion they aim at: this is the perfection of their arts.

*Leontion.* Do you derive no pleasure from the representation of a consummate actor?

*Epicurus.* High pleasure; but liable to be overturned in an instant: pleasure at the mercy of anyone who sits beside me.

*Leontion.* In my treatise I have only defended your tenets against Theophrastus.

*Epicurus.* I am certain you have done it with spirit and eloquence, dear Leontion; and there are but two words in it I would wish you to erase.

*Leontion.* Which are they?

*Epicurus.* Theophrastus and Epicurus. If you love me, you will do nothing that may make you uneasy when you

grow older; nothing that may allow my adversary to say, "Leontion soon forgot her Epicurus." My maxim is, never to defend my systems or paradoxes; if you undertake it, the Athenians will insist that I impelled you secretly, or that my philosophy and my friendship were ineffectual on you.

*Leontion.* They shall never say that.

*Epicurus.* I am not unmoved by the kindness of your intentions. Most people, and philosophers too among the rest, when their own conduct or opinions are questioned, are admirably prompt and dexterous in the science of defence; but when another's are assailed, they parry with as ill a grace and faltering a hand as if they never had taken a lesson in it at home. Seldom will they see what they profess to look for; and, finding it, they pick up with it a thorn under the nail. They canter over the solid turf, and complain that there is no corn upon it; they canter over the corn, and curse the ridges and furrows. All schools of philosophy, and almost all authors, are rather to be frequented for exercise than for freight; but this exercise ought to acquire us health and strength, spirits and good-humour. There is none of them that does not supply some truth useful to every man, and some untruth equally so to the few that are able to wrestle with it. If there were no falsehood in the world, there would be no doubt; if there were no doubt, there would be no inquiry; if no inquiry, no wisdom, no knowledge, no genius: and Fancy herself would lie muffled up in her robe, inactive, pale, and bloated. I wish we could demonstrate the existence of utility in some other evils as easily as in this.

*Leontion.* My remarks on the conduct and on the style of Theophrastus are not confined to him solely. I have taken at last a general view of our literature, and traced as



far as I am able its deviation and decline. In ancient works we sometimes see the mark of the chisel ; in modern we might almost suppose that no chisel was employed at all, and that everything was done by grinding and rubbing. There is an ordinariness, an indistinctness, a generalisation, not even to be found in a flock of sheep. As most reduce what is sand into dust, the few that avoid it run to a contrary extreme, and would force us to believe that what is original must be unpolished and uncouth.

*Epicurus.* There have been in all ages, and in all there will be, sharp and slender heads made purposely and peculiarly for creeping into the crevices of our nature. While we contemplate the magnificence of the universe, and mensurate the fitness and adaptation of one part to another, the small philosopher hangs upon a hair or creeps within a wrinkle, and cries out shrilly from his elevation that we are blind and superficial. He discovers a wart, he prys into a pore ; and he calls it knowledge of man. Poetry and criticism, and all the fine arts, have generated such living things, which not only will be co-existent with them but will (I fear) survive them. Hence history takes alternately the form of reproof and of panegyric ; and science in its pulverised state, in its shapeless and colourless atoms, assumes the name of metaphysics. We find no longer the rich succulence of Herodotus, no longer the strong filament of Thucydides, but thoughts fit only for the slave, and language for the rustic and the robber. These writings can never reach posterity, nor serve better authors near us ; for who would receive as documents the perversions of venality and party ? Alexander we know was intemperate, and Philip both intemperate and perfidious : we require not a volume of dissertation on the thread of history, to demonstrate that one or other left a tailor's bill unpaid, and the immorality

of doing so ; nor a supplement to ascertain on the best authorities which of the two it was. History should explain to us how nations rose and fell, what nurtured them in their growth, what sustained them in their maturity ; not which orator ran swiftest through the crowd from the right hand to the left, which assassin was too strong for manacles, or which felon too opulent for crucifixion.

*Leontion.* It is better, I own it, that such writers should amuse our idleness than excite our spleen.

*Ternissa.* What is spleen ?

*Epicurus.* Do not ask her ; she cannot tell you. The spleen, Ternissa, is to the heart what Arimanes is to Oromazes.

*Ternissa.* I am little the wiser yet. Does he ever use such hard words with you ?

*Leontion.* He means the evil Genius and the good Genius, in the theogony of the Persians : and would perhaps tell you, as he hath told me, that the heart in itself is free from evil, but very capable of receiving and too tenacious of holding it.

*Epicurus.* In our moral system, the spleen hangs about the heart and renders it sad and sorrowful, unless we continually keep it in exercise by kind offices, or in its proper place by serious investigation and solitary questionings. Otherwise, it is apt to adhere and to accumulate, until it deadens the principles of sound action, and obscures the sight.

*Ternissa.* It must make us very ugly when we grow old.

*Leontion.* In youth it makes us uglier, as not appertaining to it : a little more or less ugliness in decrepitude is hardly worth considering, there being quite enough of it from other quarters : I would stop it here, however.

*Ternissa.* Oh, what a thing is age!

*Leontion.* Death without death's quiet.

*Ternissa.* Leontion said that even bad writers may amuse our idle hours : alas ! even good ones do not much amuse mine, unless they record an action of love or generosity. As for the graver, why cannot they come among us and teach us, just as you do ?

*Epicurus.* Would you wish it ?

*Ternissa.* No, no ! I do not want them : only I was imagining how pleasant it is to converse as we are doing, and how sorry I should be to pore over a book instead of it. Books always makes me sigh, and think about other things. Why do you laugh, Leontion ?

*Epicurus.* She was mistaken in saying bad authors may amuse our idleness. Leontion knows not then how sweet and sacred idleness is.

*Leontion.* To render it sweet and sacred, the heart must have a little garden of its own, with its umbrage and fountains and perennial flowers—a careless company ! Sleep is called sacred as well as sweet by Homer ; and idleness is but a step from it. The idleness of the wise and virtuous should be both, it being the repose and refreshment necessary for past exertions and for future ; it punishes the bad man, it rewards the good ; the deities enjoy it, and Epicurus praises it. I was indeed wrong in my remark ; for we should never seek amusement in the foibles of another, never in coarse language, never in low thoughts. When the mind loses its feeling for elegance, it grows corrupt and grovelling, and seeks in the crowd what ought to be found at home.

*Epicurus.* Aspasia believed so, and bequeathed to Leontion, with every other gift that Nature had bestowed

upon her, the power of delivering her oracles from diviner lips.

*Leontion.* Fie! Epicurus! It is well you hide my face for me with your hand. Now take it away; we cannot walk in this manner.

*Epicurus.* No word could ever fall from you without its weight; no breath from you ought to lose itself in the common air.

*Leontion.* For shame! What would you have?

*Ternissa.* He knows not what he would have nor what he would say. I must sit down again. I declare I scarcely understand a single syllable. Well, he is very good, to tease you no longer. Epicurus has an excellent heart; he would give pain to no one; least of all to you.

*Leontion.* I have pained him by this foolish book, and he would only assure me that he does not for a moment bear me malice. Take the volume; take it, Epicurus! tear it in pieces.

*Epicurus.* No, Leontion! I shall often look with pleasure on this trophy of brave humanity; let me kiss the hand that raises it!

*Ternissa.* I am tired of sitting: I am quite stiff: when shall we walk homeward?

*Epicurus.* Take my arm, Ternissa!

*Ternissa.* Oh! I had forgotten that I proposed to myself a trip as far up as the pinasters, to look at the precipice of Oreithyia. Come along! come along! how alert does the sea-air make us! I seem to feel growing at my feet and shoulders the wings of Zethes or Calaïs.

*Epicurus.* Leontion walks the nimblest to-day.

*Ternissa.* To display her activity and strength, she runs before us. Sweet Leontion, how good she is! but she

should have stayed for us : it would be in vain to try to overtake her.

No, Epicurus ! Mind ! take care ! you are crushing these little oleanders—and now the strawberry plants—the whole heap. Not I, indeed. What would my mother say, if she knew it ? And Leontion ? she will certainly look back.

*Epicurus.* The fairest of the Eudaimones never look back : such are the Hours and Love, Opportunity and Leontion.

*Ternissa.* How could you dare to treat me in this manner ? I did not say again I hated anything.

*Epicurus.* Forgive me !

*Ternissa.* Violent creature !

*Epicurus.* If tenderness is violence. Forgive me ; and say you love me.

*Ternissa.* All at once ? could you endure such boldness ?

*Epicurus.* Pronounce it ! whisper it

*Ternissa.* Go, go. Would it be proper ?

*Epicurus.* Is that sweet voice asking its heart or me ? let the worthier give the answer.

*Ternissa.* O Epicurus ! you are very, very dear to me ; and are the last in the world that would ever tell you were called so.





## MARCUS TULLIUS AND QUINCTUS CICERO.

[Cicero, towards the close of his life, discourses with his brother Quinctus concerning life and death. In this dialogue Landor has presented the more Stoic side of his philosophy. The Allegory of Truth Mr. Colvin pronounces the most perfect in the English language with one exception, also by Landor—the Allegory of Love, Sleep, and Death in the *Pentameron*.]

*Marcus.* The last calamities of our country, my brother Quinctus, have again united us ; and something like the tenderness of earlier days appears to have returned, in the silence of ambition and in the subsidence of hope. It has frequently occurred to me how different we are from the moment when the parental roof bursts asunder, as it were, and the inmates are scattered abroad, and build up here and there new families. Many, who before lived in amity and concord, are then in the condition of those who, receiving intelligence of a shipwreck, collect at once for plunder, and quarrel on touching the first fragment.

*Quinctus.* We never disagreed on the division of any property, unless indeed the State and its honours may be considered as such ; and although, in regard to Cæsar, our fortune drew us different ways latterly, and my gratitude made me, until your remonstrances and prayers prevailed, reluctant to abandon him, you will remember my anxiety to procure you the consulate and the triumph. You cannot and never could suppose me unmindful of the signal benefits and high distinctions I have received from Cæsar, or quite unreluctant to desert an army, for my services in which he often praised me to you, while I was in Britain and in

Gaul. Such moreover was his generosity, he did not erase my name from his *Commentaries* for having abandoned and opposed his cause. My joy, therefore, ought not to be unmingled at his violent death, to whom I am indebted not only for confidence and command, not only for advancement and glory, but also for immortality. When you yourself had resolved on leaving Italy to follow Cneius Pompeius, you were sensible, as you told me, that my obligations to Cæsar should at least detain me in Italy. Our disputes, which among men who reason will be frequent, were always amicable ; our political views have always been similar, and generally the same. You indeed were somewhat more aristocratical and senatorial ; and this prejudice hath ruined both. As if the immortal gods took a pleasure in confounding us by the difficulty of our choice, they placed the best men at the head of the worst cause. Decimus Brutus and Porcius Cato held up the train of Sylla ; for the late civil wars were only a continuation of those which the old dictator seemed, for a time, to have extinguished in blood and ruins. His faction was in authority when you first appeared at Rome ; and although, among your friends and sometimes in public, you have spoken as a Roman should speak of Caius Marius, a respect for Pompeius (the most insincere of mortals) made you silent on the merits of Sertorius—than whom there never was a better man in private life, a magistrate more upright, a general more vigilant, a citizen more zealous for the prerogative of our republic. Caius Cæsar, the later champion of the same party, overcame difficulties almost equally great, and, having acted upon a more splendid theatre, may perhaps appear a still greater character.

Marcus. He will seem so to those only who place temperance and prudence, fidelity and patriotism, aside

from the component parts of greatness. Cæsar, of all men, knew best when to trust Fortune : Sertorius never trusted her at all, nor ever marched a step along a path he had not patiently and well explored. The best of Romans slew the one, the worst the other. The death of Cæsar was that which the wise and virtuous would most deprecate for themselves and for their children ; that of Sertorius what they would most desire. And since, Quinctus, we have seen the ruin of our country, and her enemies are intent on ours, let us be grateful that the last years of life have neither been useless nor inglorious, and that it is likely to close, not under the condemnation of such citizens as Cato and Brutus, but as Lepidus and Antonius. It is with more sorrow than asperity that I reflect on Caius Cæsar. Oh ! had his heart been unambitious as his style, had he been as prompt to succour his country as to enslave her, how great, how incomparably great, were he ! Then perhaps at this hour, O Quinctus, and in this villa, we should have enjoyed his humorous and erudite discourse ; for no man ever tempered so seasonably and so justly the materials of conversation. How graceful was he ! how unguarded ! His whole character was uncovered ; as we represent the bodies of heroes and of gods. Two years ago, at this very season, on the third of the Saturnalia, he came hither spontaneously and unexpectedly to dine with me ; and although one of his attendants read to him, as he desired while he was bathing, the verses on him and Mamurra, he retained his usual good-humour, and discoursed after dinner on many points of literature, with admirable ease and judgment. Him I shall see again ; and, while he acknowledges my justice, I shall acknowledge his virtues, and contemplate them unclouded. I shall see again our father, and Mutius Scævola, and you, and our sons, and the ingenuous and faithful Tyro. He

alone has power over my life, if any has ; for to him I confide my writings. And our worthy Marcus Brutus will meet me, whom I would embrace among the first ; for, if I have not done him an injury, I have caused him one. Had I never lived, or had I never excited his envy, he might perhaps have written as I have done ; but for the sake of avoiding me he caught both cold and fever. Let us pardon him ; let us love him. With a weakness that injured his eloquence, and with a softness of soul that sapped the constitution of our State, he is no unworthy branch of that family which will be remembered the longest among men.

Oh happy day, when I shall meet my equals, and when my inferiors shall trouble me no more !

Man thinks it miserable to be cut off in the midst of his projects : he should rather think it miserable to have formed them. For the one is his own action, the other is not ; the one was subject from the beginning to disappointments and vexations, the other ends them. And what truly is that period of life in which we are not in the midst of our projects ? They spring up only the more rank and wild, year after year, from their extinction or change of form, as herbage from the corruption and dying down of herbage.

*Quinctus.* Do you believe that the Marian faction would have annulled your Order ?

*Marcus.* I believe that their safety would have required its ruin, and that their vengeance, not to say their equity, would have accomplished it. The civil war was of the Senate against the Equestrian Order and the people, and was maintained by the wealth of the patricians, accumulated in the time of Sylla, from the proscription of all whom violence made, or avarice called, its adversaries. It would have been necessary to confiscate the whole property of the Order, and to banish its members from Italy. Any measure

short of these would have been inadequate to compensate the people for their losses ; nor would there have been a sufficient pledge for the maintenance of tranquillity. The exclusion of three hundred families from their estates, which they had acquired in great part by rapine, and their expulsion from a country which they had inundated with blood, would have prevented that partition-treaty, whereby are placed in the hands of three men the properties and lives of all.

There should in no government be a contrariety of interests. Checks are useful ; but it is better to stand in no need of them. Bolts and bars are good things ; but would you establish a college of thieves and robbers to try how good they are ? Misfortune has taught me many truths, which a few years ago I should have deemed suspicious and dangerous. The fall of Rome and of Carthage, the form of whose governments was almost the same, has been occasioned by the divisions of the ambitious in their Senates : for we Conscript Fathers call that ambition which the lower ranks call avarice. In fact, the only difference is that the one wears fine linen, the other coarse ; one covets the government of Asia, the other a cask of vinegar. The people were indifferent which side prevailed, until their houses in that country were reduced to ashes ; in this, were delivered to murderers and gamesters.

*Quinctus.* Painful is it to reflect, that the greatness of most men originates from what has been taken by fraud or violence out of the common stock. The greatness of States, on the contrary, depends on the subdivision of property, chiefly of the landed, in moderate portions ; on the frugal pay of functionaries, chiefly of those who possess a property ; and on unity of interests and designs. Where provinces are allotted, not for the public service, but for the enrichment



of private families; where consuls wish one thing, and tribunes wish another—how can there be prosperity or safety? If Carthage, whose government (as you observe) much resembled ours, had allowed the same rights generally to the inhabitants of Africa; had she been as zealous in civilising as in coercing them—she would have ruined our Commonwealth and ruled the world. Rome found the rest of Italy more cultivated than herself, but corrupted for the greater part by luxury, ignorant of military science, and more patient of slavery than of toil. She conquered; and in process of time infused into them somewhat of her spirit, and imparted to them somewhat of her institutions. Nothing was then wanting to her policy, but only to grant voluntarily what she might have foreseen they would unite to enforce, and to have constituted a social body in Italy. This would have rendered her invincible. Ambition would not permit our senators to divide with others the wealth and aggrandisement arising from authority: and hence our worst citizens are become our rulers. The same error was committed by Sertorius, from purer principles, when he created a Senate in Spain, but admitted no Spaniard. The practice of disinterestedness, the force of virtue, in despite of so grievous an affront, united to him the bravest and most honourable of nations. If he had granted to them what was theirs by nature, and again due for benefits, he would have had nothing else to regret, than that they had so often broken our legions, and covered our commanders with shame.

What could be expected in our country, where the aristocracy possessed in the time of Sylla more than half the land, and disposed of all the revenues and offices arising from our conquests? It would be idle to remark that the armies were paid out of them, when those armies were but

the household of the rich, and necessary to their safety. On such reasoning there is no clear profit, no property, no possession; we cannot eat without a cook, without a husbandman, without a butcher: these take a part of our money. The armies were no less the armies of the aristocracy than the money that paid and the provinces that supplied them; no less, in short, than their beds and bolsters.

Why could not we have done from policy and equity what has been and often will be done, under another name, by favour and injustice? On the agrarian law we never were unanimous; yet Tiberius Gracchus had among the upholders of his plan the most prudent, the most equitable, and the most dignified in the republic—Lælius, the friend of Scipio, whose wisdom and moderation you have lately extolled in your dialogue; Crassus, then Pontifex Maximus; and Appius Claudius, who resolved by this virtuous and patriotic deed to wipe away the stain left for ages on his family, by its licentiousness, pride, and tyranny. To these names another must be added; a name which we have been taught from our youth upward to hold in reverence—the greatest of our jurists, Mutius Scævola. The adversaries of the measure cannot deny the humanity and liberality of its provisions, by which those who might be punished for violating the laws should be indemnified for the loss of the possessions they held illegally, and these possessions should be distributed among the poorer families; not for the purpose of corrupting their votes, but that they should have no temptation to sell them.

You smile, Marcus!

*Marcus.* For this very thing the Conscript Fathers were inimical to Tiberius Gracchus, and accused him of an attempt to introduce visionary and impracticable changes

into the Commonwealth. Among the elder of his partisans some were called ambitious, some prejudiced; among the younger, some were madmen, the rest traitors—just as they were protected or unprotected by the power of their families or the influence of their friends.

*Quinctus.* The most equitable and necessary law promulgated of latter times in our republic was that by Caius Gracchus, who, finding all our magistratures in the disposal of the Senate, and witnessing the acquittal of all criminals whose peculations and extortions had ruined our provinces and shaken our dominion, transferred the judicial power to the Equestrian Order. Cépion's law, five-and-twenty years afterward, was an infringement of this; and the oration of Lucius Crassus in its favour, bearing with it the force of genius and the stamp of authority, formed in great measure, as you acknowledge, both your politics and your eloquence. The intimacy of Crassus with Aculeo, the husband of our maternal aunt, inclined you perhaps to follow the more readily his opinions, and to set a higher value than you might otherwise have done on his celebrated oration.

*Marcus.* You must remember, my brother, that I neither was nor professed myself to be adverse to every agrarian law, though I opposed with all my energy and authority that agitated by Rullus. On which occasion I represented the two Gracchi as most excellent men, inflamed by the purest love of the Roman people, in their proposal to divide among the citizens what was unquestionably their due. I mentioned them as those on whose wisdom and institutions many of the solid parts in our government were erected; and I opposed the particular law at that time laid before the people, as leading to the tyranny of a decemvirate. The projects of Cæsar and Pompeius on this business were unjust and pernicious;

those of Gracchus I now acknowledge to have been equitable to the citizens and salutary to the State. Unless I made you this concession, how could I defend my own conduct, a few months ago, in persuading the Senate to distribute among the soldiers of the fourth legion and the legion of Mars, for their services to the republic, those lands in Campania which Cæsar and Pompeius would have allotted in favour of their partisans in usurpation? Caius Gracchus on the contrary would look aside to no advantage or utility; and lost the most powerful of his friends, adherents, and relatives, by his inflexible rectitude.

*Quinctus.* The attempt to restore the best and wisest of our ancient customs was insolently and falsely called innovation. For from the foundation of our city, a part of the conquered lands was sold by auction *under the spear*—an expression which hath since been used to designate the same transaction within the walls; another part was holden in common; a third was leased out at an easy rate to the poorer citizens. So that formerly the lower and intermediate class possessed by right the exclusive benefit of *two-thirds*, and an equal chance (wherever there was industry and frugality) of the other. Latterly, by various kinds of vexation and oppression, they have been deprived of nearly the whole.

Cornelia was not a woman of a heart so sickly tender as to awaken its sympathies at all hours, and to excite and pamper in it a false appetite. Like the rest of her family, she cared little or nothing for the applauses and opinions of the people: she loved justice; and it was on justice that she wished her children to lay the foundation of their glory. This ardour was inextinguished in her by the blood of her eldest son. She saw his name placed where she wished it;

and she pointed it out to Caius. Scandalous words may be written on the wall under it, by dealers in votes and traffickers in loyalty : but little is the worth of a name that perishes by chalk or charcoal.

*Marcus.* The moral, like the physical body, hath not always the same wants in the same degree. We put off or on a greater or less quantity of clothes according to the season ; and it is to the season that we must accommodate ourselves in government, wherein there are only a few leading principles which are never to be disturbed. I now perceive that the laws of society in one thing resemble the laws of perspective : they require that what is below should rise gradually, and that what is above should descend in the same proportion, but not that they should touch. Still less do they inform us, what is echoed in our ears by new masters from camp and school-room, that the wisest and best should depend on the weakest and worst ; and that when individuals, however ignorant of moral discipline and impatient of self-restraint, are deemed adequate to the management of their affairs at twenty years, a State should never be ; that boys should come out of pupilage, that men should return to it ; that people, in their actions and abilities so contemptible as the triumvirate, should become by their own appointment our tutors and guardians, and shake their scourges over Marcus Brutus, Marcus Varro, Marcus Tullius. The Romans are hastening back, I see, to the government of hereditary kings, whether by that name or another is immaterial, which no virtuous and dignified man, no philosopher of whatever sect, hath recommended, approved, or tolerated ; and than which no moralist, no fabulist, no visionary, no poet, satirical or comic, no Fescennine jester, no dwarf or eunuch (the most privileged of privileged classes), no runner at the side of a triumphal



car, in the uttermost extravagance of his licentiousness, has imagined anything more absurd, more indecorous, or more insulting. What else indeed is the reason why a nation is called barbarous by the Greeks and us? This alone stamps the character upon it, standing for whatever is monstrous, for whatever is debased.

What a shocking sight should we consider an old father of a family led in chains along the public street, with boys and prostitutes shouting after him!—and should we not retire from it quickly and anxiously? A sight greatly more shocking now presents itself: an ancient nation is reduced to slavery, by those who vowed before the people and before the altars to defend her. And is it hard for us, O Quinctus, to turn away our eyes from this abomination? Or is it necessary for a Gaul or an Illyrian to command us that we close them on it?

*Quinctus.* No, Marcus, no! Let us think upon it as our forefathers always thought, and our friends lately.

*Marcus.* I am your host, my brother, and must recall you awhile to pleasanter ideas. How beautiful is this Formian coast! how airy this villa! Ah, whether have I beckoned your reflections!—it is the last of ours perhaps we may ever see. Do you remember the races of our children along the sands, and their consternation when Tyro cried, "*The Læstrygons! the Læstrygons!*" He little thought he prophesied in his mirth, and all that poetry has feigned of these monsters should in so few years be accomplished. The other evening, an hour or two before sunset, I sailed quietly along the coast, for there was little wind, and the stillness on shore made my heart faint within me. I remembered how short a time ago I had conversed with Cato around the villa of Lucullus, whose son, such was the modesty of the youth, followed rather than accompanied us.

O gods ! how little then did I foresee or apprehend that the guardianship of this young man, and also of Cato's son, would within one year have devolved on me, by the deplorable death of their natural protector !

*Quinctus.* There is something of softness, not unallied to sorrow, in these mild winter days and their humid sunshine.

*Marcus.* I know not, Quinctus, by what train or connection of ideas they lead me rather to the past than to the future ; unless it be that, when the fibres of our bodies are relaxed, as they must be in such weather, the spirits fall back easily upon reflection, and are slowly incited to expectation. The memory of those great men who consolidated our republic by their wisdom, exalted it by their valour, and protected and defended it by their constancy, stands not alone nor idly ; they draw us after them, they place us with them. O Quinctus ! I wish I could impart to you my firm persuasion, that after death we shall enter into their society : and what matter if the place of our reunion be not the Capitol or the Forum, be not Elysian meadows or Atlantic islands ? Locality has nothing to do with mind once free. Carry this thought perpetually with you ; and Death, whether you believe it terminates our whole existence or otherwise, will lose, I will not say its terrors, for the brave and wise have none, but its anxieties and inquietudes.

*Quinctus.* Brother, when I see that many dogmas in religion have been invented to keep the intellect in subjection, I may fairly doubt the rest.

*Marcus.* Yes, if any emolument be derived from them to the colleges of priests. But surely he deserves the dignity and the worship of a god, who first instructed men that by their own volition they may enjoy eternal happiness ; that the road to it is most easy and most beautiful, such as any one would follow by preference, even if nothing

desirable were at the end of it. Neither to give nor to take offence, are surely the two things most delightful in human life; and it is by these two things that eternal happiness may be attained. We shall enjoy a future state accordingly as we have employed our intellect and our affections. Perfect bliss can be expected by few; but fewer will be so miserable as they have been here.

*Quinctus.* A belief to the contrary, if we admit a future life, would place the gods beneath us in their best properties—justice and beneficence.

*Marcus.* Belief in a future life is the appetite of reason: and I see not why we should not gratify it as unreluctantly as the baser. Religion does not call upon us to believe the fables of the vulgar, but on the contrary to correct them.

*Quinctus.* Otherwise, overrun as we are in Rome by foreigners of every nation, and ready to receive, as we have been, the buffooneries of Syrian and Egyptian priests, our citizens may within a few years become not only the dupes, but the tributaries, of these impostors. The Syrian may scourge us until we join him in his lamentation of Adonis; and the Egyptian may tell us that it is unholy to eat a chicken, and holy to eat an egg; while a sly rogue of Judæa whispers in our ear, "That is superstition; you go to heaven if you pay me a tenth of your harvests." This, I have heard Cneius Pompeius relate, is done in Judæa.

*Marcus.* Yes, but the tenth paid all the expenses both of civil government and religious; for the magistracy was (if such an expression can be repeated with seriousness) *theocratical*. In time of peace, a decimation of property would be intolerable. But the Jews have been always at war; natives of a sterile country and borderers of a fertile one, acute, meditative, melancholy, morose. I know not

whether we ourselves have performed such actions as they have, or whether any nation has fought with such resolution and pertinacity. We laugh at their worship: they abominate ours. In this I think we are the wiser; for surely on speculative points it is better to laugh than to abominate. But whence have you brought your eggs and chickens? I have heard our Varro tell many stories about the Egyptian ordinances, but I do not remember this.

*Quinctus.* Indeed the distinction seems a little too absurd, even for the worshippers of cats and crocodiles. Perhaps I may have wronged them; the nation I may indeed have forgotten, but I am certain of the fact: I place it in the archives of superstition, you may deposit it in its right cell. Among the Athenians, the priestess of Minerva was entitled to a measure of barley, a measure of wheat, and an obol, on every birth and death. Some Eastern nations are so totally subjected to the priesthood, that a member of it is requisite at birth, at death, and, by Thalassius! at marriage itself. He can even inflict pains and penalties; he can oblige you to tell him all the secrets of the heart: he can call your wife to him, your daughter to him, your blooming and innocent son; he can absolve from sin; he can exclude from pardon.

*Marcus.* Now, Quinctus, egg and chicken, cat and crocodile, disappear and vanish: you repeat impossibilities; mankind, in its lowest degradation, has never been depressed so low. The savage would strangle the impostor that attempted it; the civilised man would scourge him and hiss him from society. Come, come, brother! we may expect such a state of things, whenever we find united the genius of the Cimmerian and the courage of the Troglodyte. Religions wear out, cover them with gold or case them with iron as you will. Jupiter is now less powerful

in Crete than when he was in his cradle there, and spreads fewer terrors at Dodona than a shepherd's cur. Proconsuls have removed from Greece, from Asia, from Sicily, the most celebrated statues; and it is doubted at last whether those deities are in heaven, whom a cart and a yoke of oxen have carried away on earth. When the civil wars are over, and the minds of men become indolent and inactive, as is always the case after great excitement, it is not improbable that some novelties may be attempted in religion; but, as my prophecies in the whole course of the late events have been accomplished, so you may believe me when I prognosticate that our religion, although it should be disfigured and deteriorated, will continue in many of its features, in many of its pomps and ceremonies, the same. Sibylline books will never be wanting while fear and curiosity are inherent in the composition of man. And there is something consolatory in this idea of duration and identity; for whatever be your philosophy, you must acknowledge that it is pleasant to think, although you know not wherefore, that, when we go away, things visible, like things intellectual, will remain in great measure as we left them. A slight displeasure would be felt by us, if we were certain that after our death our houses would be taken down, though not only no longer inhabited by us, but probably not destined to remain in the possession of our children; and that even these vineyards, fields, and gardens, were about to assume another aspect.

On that promontory the mansion of Cornelia is yet standing; the same which Marius bought afterward, and which our friend Lucullus last inhabited; and, whether from reverence of her virtues and exalted name, or that the gods preserve it as a monument of womanhood, its exterior



is unchanged. Here she resided many years, and never would be induced to revisit Rome after the murder of her younger son. She cultivated a variety of flowers, naturalised exotic plants, and brought together trees from vale and mountain : trees unproductive of fruit, but affording her, in their superintendence and management, a tranquil expectant pleasure. "There is no amusement," said she, "so lasting and varied, so healthy and peaceful, as horticulture." We read that the Babylonians and Persians were formerly much addicted to similar places of recreation. I have scarcely any knowledge in these matters ; and the first time I went thither I asked many questions of the gardener's boy, a child about nine years old. He thought me even more ignorant than I was, and said, among other such remarks, "I do not know what they call this plant at Rome, or whether they have it there ; but it is among the commonest here, beautiful as it is, and we call it cythus." "Thank you, child !" said I smiling ; "and," pointing towards two cypresses, "pray what do you call those high and gloomy trees at the extremity of the avenue, just above the precipice ?" "Others like them," replied he, "are called cypresses ; but these, I know not why, have always been called Tiberius and Caius."

*Quinctus.* Of all studies, the most delightful and the most useful is biography. The seeds of great events lie near the surface ; historians delve too deep for them. No history was ever true : lives I have read which, if they were not, had the appearance, the interest, and the utility of truth.

*Marcus.* I have collected facts about Cornelia worth recording ; and I would commemorate them the rather, as, while the Greeks have had among them no few women of abilities, we can hardly mention two.

*Quinctus.* Yet ours have advantages which theirs had not. Did Cornelia die unrepining and contented?

*Marcus.* She was firmly convinced to the last that an agrarian law would have been just and beneficial, and was consoled that her illustrious sons had discharged at once the debt of nature and of patriotism. Glory is a light that shines from us on others, and not from others on us. Assured that future ages would render justice to the memory of her children, Cornelia thought they had already received the highest approbation, when they had received their own. If anything was wanting, their mother gave it. No stranger of distinction left Italy without a visit to her. You would imagine that they, and that she particularly, would avoid the mention of her sons: it was however the subject on which she most delighted to converse, and which she never failed to introduce on finding a worthy auditor. I have heard from our father and from Scævola, both of whom in their adolescence had been present on such occasions, that she mentioned her children, no longer indeed with the calm complacency and full content with which she showed them to the lady of Campania as her gems and ornaments, but with such an exultation of delight at their glory, as she would the heroes of antiquity. So little of what is painful in emotion did she exhibit at the recital, those who could not comprehend her magnanimity at first believed her maddened by her misfortunes; but so many signs of wisdom soon displayed themselves, such staidness and sedateness of demeanour, such serene majestic suavity, they felt as if some deity were present; and when wonder and admiration and awe permitted them to lift up their eyes again toward her, they discovered from hers that the fondest of mothers had been speaking—the mother of the Gracchi.

Your remark on biography is just ; yet how far below the truth is even the best representation of those whose minds the gods have illuminated ! How much greater would the greatest man appear, if any one about him could perceive those innumerable filaments of thought which break as they arise from the brain, and the slenderest of which is worth all the wisdom of many at whose discretion lies the felicity of nations ! This in itself is impossible ; but there are fewer who mark what appears on a sudden and disappears again (such is the conversation of the wise), than there are who calculate those stars that are now coming forth above us : scarcely one in several millions can apportion, to what is exalted in mind, its magnitude, place, and distance. We must be contented to be judged by that which people can discern and handle : that which they can have among them, most at leisure, is most likely to be well examined and duly estimated. Whence I am led to believe that my writings, and those principally which instruct men in their rights and duties, will obtain me a solider and more extensive reputation than I could have acquired in public life, by busier, harder, and more anxious labours. Public men appear to me to live in that delusion which Socrates, in the *Phædo*, would persuade us is common to all our species. “We live in holes,” says he, “and fancy that we are living in the highest parts of the earth.” What he says physically I would say morally. Judge whether my observation is not at least as reasonable as his hypothesis ; and indeed, to speak ingenuously, whether I have not converted what is physically false and absurd into what is morally true and important.

*Quinctus.* True, beyond a question, and important as those whom it concerns will let it be. They who stand in high stations wish for higher ; but they who have occupied the highest of all often think with regret of some one pleasanter

they left below. Servius Tullius, a prudent man, dedicated to Fortune what we call the narrow temple, with a statue in proportion, expressing his idea that Fortune in the condition of mediocrity is more reasonably than any other the object of our vows. He could have given her as magnificent a name, and as magnificent a residence, as any she possesses ; and you know she has many of both ; but he wished perhaps to try whether for once she would be as favourable to wisdom as to enterprise.

*Marcus.* If life allows us time for the experiment, let us also try it.

Sleep, which the Epicureans and others have represented as the image of death, is, we know, the repairer of activity and strength. If they spoke reasonably and consistently, they might argue from their own principles, or at least take the illustration from their own fancy, that death like sleep may also restore our powers, and in proportion to its universality and absoluteness. Pursuers as they are of pleasure, their unsettled and restless imagination loves rather to brood over an abyss, than to expatiate on places of amenity and composure. Just as sleep is the renovator of corporeal vigour, so, with their permission, I would believe death to be of the mind's ; that the body, to which it is attached rather from habitude than from reason, is little else than a disease to our immortal spirit ; and that, like the remora, of which mariners tell marvels, it counteracts, as it were, both oar and sail, in the most strenuous advances we can make toward felicity. Shall we lament to feel this reptile drop off ? Or shall we not, on the contrary, leap with alacrity on shore, and offer up in gratitude to the gods whatever is left about us uncorroded and unshattered ? A broken and abject mind is the thing least worthy of their acceptance.

*Quinctus.* Brother, you talk as if there were a plurality of gods.

*Marcus.* I know not and care not how many there may be of them. Philosophy points to unity ; but while we are here, we speak as those do who are around us, and employ in these matters the language of our country. Italy is not so fertile in hemlock as Greece ; yet a wise man will dissemble half his wisdom on such a topic ; and I, as you remember, adopting the means of dialogue, have often delivered my opinions in the voice of others, and speak now as custom not as reason leads me.

*Quinctus.* Marcus, I still observe in you somewhat of aversion to Epicurus, a few of whose least important positions you have controverted in your dialogues ; and I wish that, even there, you had been less irrisory, less of a pleader ; that you had been, in dispassionate urbanity, his follower. Such was also the opinion of two men the most opposite in other things, Brutus and Cæsar. Religions may fight in the street, or over the grave : Philosophy never should. We ought to forego the manners of the Forum in our disquisitions, which, if they continue to be agitated as they have been, will be designated at last not only by foul epithets drawn from that unsober tub, but, as violence is apt to increase in fury until it falls from exhaustion, by those derived from war and bloodshed. I should not be surprised, if they who write and reason on our calm domestic duties, on our best and highest interests, should hereafter be designated by some such terms as *polemical* and *sarcastic*. As horses start aside from objects they see imperfectly, so do men. Enmities are excited by an indistinct view ; they would be allayed by conference. Look at any long avenue of trees, by which the traveller on our principal highways is



protected from the sun. Those at the beginning are wide apart, but those at the end almost meet. Thus happens it frequently in opinions. Men, who were far asunder, come nearer and nearer in the course of life, if they have strength enough to quell, or good sense enough to temper and assuage, their earlier animosities. Were it possible for you to have spent an hour with Epicurus, you would have been delighted with him ; for his nature was like the better part of yours. Zeno set out from an opposite direction, yet they meet at last and shake hands. He who shows us how Fear may be reasoned with and pacified, how Death may be disarmed of terrors, how Pleasure may be united with Innocence and with Constancy ; he who persuades us that Vice is painful and vindictive, and that Ambition, deemed the most manly of our desires, is the most childish and illusory—deserves our gratitude. Children would fall asleep before they had trifled so long as grave men do. If you must quarrel with Epicurus on the principal good, take my idea. The happy man is he who distinguishes the boundary between desire and delight, and stands firmly on the higher ground ; he who knows that pleasure not only is not possession, but is often to be lost and always to be endangered by it. In life, as in those prospects which if the sun were above the horizon we should see from hence, the objects covered with the softest light, and offering the most beautiful forms in the distance, are wearisome to attain and barren.

In one of your last letters you told me that you had come over into the camp of your old adversary.

*Marcus.* I could not rest with him. As we pardon those reluctantly who destroy our family tombs, is it likely or reasonable that he should be forgiven who levels to the ground the fabric to which they lead, and to which they are only a rude and temporary vestibule ?

*Quinctus.* Socrates was heard with more attention, Pythagoras had more authority in his lifetime ; but no philosopher hath excited so much enthusiasm in those who never frequented, never heard nor saw him ; and yet his doctrines are not such in themselves as would excite it. How, then, can it be, otherwise than partly from the innocence of his life, and partly from the relief his followers experienced in abstraction from unquiet and insatiable desires ? Many, it is true, have spoken of him with hatred ; but among his haters are none who knew him : which is remarkable, singular, wonderful ; for hatred seems as natural to men as hunger is, and excited like hunger by the presence of its food ; and the more exquisite the food, the more excitable is the hunger.

*Marcus.* I do not remember to have met anywhere before with the thought you have just expressed. Certain it is, however, that men in general have a propensity to hatred, profitless as it is and painful. We say proverbially, after Ennius or some other old poet, the descent to Avernus is easy : not less easily are we carried down to the more pestiferous pool whereinto we would drag our superiors and submerge them. It is the destiny of the obscure to be despised ; it is the privilege of the illustrious to be hated. Whoever hates me proves and feels himself to be less than I am. If in argument we can make a man angry with us, we have drawn him from his vantage-ground and overcome him. For he, who in order to attack a little man (and every one calls his adversary so) ceases to defend the truth, shows that truth is less his object than the little man. I profess the tenets of the New Academy, because it teaches us modesty in the midst of wisdom, and leads through doubt to inquiry. Hence it appears to me that it must render us quieter and more studious, without

doing what Epicurus would do ; that is, without singing us to sleep in groves and meadows, while our country is calling on us loudly to defend her. Nevertheless, I have lived in the most familiar way with Epicureans, as you know, and have loved them affectionately. There is no more certain sign of a narrow mind, of stupidity, and of arrogance, than to stand aloof from those who think differently from ourselves. If they have weighed the matter in dispute as carefully, it is equitable to suppose that they have the same chance as we have of being in the right ; if they have not, we may as reasonably be out of humour with our footman or chairman : he is more ignorant and more careless of it still.

. . . . .

*Quinctus.* I see the servants have lighted the lamps in the house earlier than usual, hoping, I suppose, we shall retire to rest in good time, that to-morrow they may prepare the festivities for your birthday.

Within how few minutes has the night closed in upon us ! Nothing is left discernible of the promontories, or the long irregular breakers under them. We have before us only a faint glimmering from the shells in our path, and from the blossoms of the arbutus.

*Marcus.* The Circean hills, and even the nearer, loftier, and whiter rocks of Anxur, are become indistinguishable. We leave our Cato and our Lucullus ; we leave Cornelia and her children, the scenes of friendship and the recollections of greatness, for Lepidus and Octavius and Antonius ; and who knows whether this birthday, between which and us so few days intervene, may not be, as it certainly will be the least pleasurable, the last ! Death has two aspects : dreary and sorrowful to those of prosperous,

mild and almost genial to those of adverse fortune. Her countenance is old to the young, and youthful to the aged : to the former her voice is importunate, her gait terrific ; the latter she approaches like a bedside friend, and calls in a whisper that invites to rest. To us, my Quinctus, advanced as we are on our way, weary from its perplexities and dizzy from its precipices, she gives a calm welcome : let her receive a cordial one.

If life is a present which any one foreknowing its contents would have willingly declined, does it not follow that any one would as willingly give it up, having well tried what they are ? I speak of the reasonable, the firm, the virtuous ; not of those who, like bad governors, are afraid of laying down the powers and privileges they have been proved unworthy of holding. Were it certain that the longer we live the wiser we become and the happier, then indeed a long life would be desirable ; but since on the contrary our mental strength decays, and our enjoyments of every kind not only sink and cease, but diseases and sorrows come in place of them, if any wish is rational, it is surely the wish that we should go away unshaken by years, undepressed by griefs, and undespoiled of our better faculties. Life and death appear more certainly ours than whatsoever else ; and yet hardly can that be called ours, which comes without our knowledge, and goes without it ; or that which we cannot put aside if we would, and indeed can anticipate but little. There are few who can regulate life to any extent ; none who can order the things it shall receive or exclude. What value, then, should be placed upon it by the prudent man, when duty or necessity calls him away ? Or what reluctance should he feel on passing into a state where at least he must be conscious of fewer checks and inabilities ? Such, my brother, as the brave

commander, when from the secret and dark passages of some fortress wherein implacable enemies besieged him, having performed all his duties and exhausted all his munition, he issues at a distance into open day.

Everything has its use : life to teach us the contempt of death, and death the contempt of life. Glory, which among all things between stands eminently the principal, although it has been considered by some philosophers as mere vanity and deception, moves those great intellects which nothing else could have stirred, and places them where they can best and most advantageously serve the Commonwealth. Glory can be safely despised by those only who have fairly won it : a low, ignorant, or vicious man should dispute on other topics. The philosopher who contemns it has every rogue in his sect, and may reckon that it will outlive all others. Occasion may have been wanting to some ; I grant it. They may have remained their whole lifetime like dials in the shade, always fit for use and always useless ; but this must occur either in monarchical governments, or where persons occupy the first station who ought hardly to have been admitted to the secondary, and whom jealousy has guided more frequently than justice.

It is true there is much inequality, much inconsiderateness, in the distribution of fame ; and the principles according to which honour ought to be conferred are not only violated, but often inverted. Whoever wishes to be thought great among men must do them some great mischief ; and the longer he continues in doing things of this sort, the more he will be admired. The features of Fortune are so like those of Genius as to be mistaken by almost all the world. We whose names and works are honourable to our country, and destined to survive her, are less esteemed than those who have accelerated her decay ;



yet even here the sense of injury rises from and is accompanied by a sense of merit, the tone of which is deeper and predominant.

When we have spoken of life, death, and glory, we have spoken of all important things, except friendship; for eloquence and philosophy, and other inferior attainments, are either means conducive to life and glory, or antidotes against the bitterness of death. We cannot conquer fate and necessity, yet we can yield to them in such a manner as to be greater than if we could. I have observed your impatience: you were about to appeal in behalf of virtue. But virtue is presupposed in friendship, as I have mentioned in my *Lælius*; nor have I ever separated it from philosophy or from glory. I discussed the subject most at large and most methodically in my treatise on our *Duties*, and I find no reason to alter my definition or deductions. On friendship, in the present condition of our affairs, I would say but little. Could I begin my existence again, and, what is equally impossible, could I see before me all I have seen, I would choose few acquaintances, fewer friendships, no familiarities. This rubbish, for such it generally is, collecting at the base of an elevated mind, lessens its height and impairs its character. What requires to be sustained, if it is greater, falls; if it is smaller, is lost to view by the intervention of its supporters.

In literature, great men suffer more from their little friends than from their potent enemies. It is not by our adversaries that our early shoots of glory are nipped and broken off, or our later pestilentially blighted; it is by those who lie at our feet, and look up to us with a solicitous and fixed regard until our shadow grows thicker and makes them colder. Then they begin to praise us as worthy men indeed, and good citizens, but rather vain, and what

(to speak the truth) in others they should call presumptuous. They entertain no doubt of our merit in literature; yet justice forces them to declare that several have risen up lately who promise to surpass us. Should it be asked of them who these are, they look modest, and tell you softly and submissively it would ill become them to repeat the eulogies of their acquaintance, and that no man pronounces his own name so distinctly as another's. I had something of oratory once about me, and was borne on high by the spirit of the better Greeks. Thus they thought of me; and they thought of me, Quinctus, no more than thus. They had reached the straits, and saw before them the boundary, the impassable Atlantic, of the intellectual world. But now I am a bad citizen and a worse writer: I want the exercise and effusion of my own breath to warm me; I must be chafed by an adversary; I must be supported by a crowd; I require the Forum, the Rostra, the Senate: in my individuality I am nothing.

You remember the apologue of Critobulus?

*Quinctus.* No, I do not.

*Marcus.* It was sent to me by Pomponius Atticus soon after my marriage: I must surely have shown it to you.

*Quinctus.* Not you, indeed: and I should wonder that so valuable a present, so rare an accession to Rome as a new Greek volume, could have come into your hands and not out of them into mine, if you had not mentioned that it was about the time of your nuptials. Let me hear the story.

*Marcus.* "I was wandering," says Critobulus, "in the midst of a forest, and came suddenly to a small round fountain or pool, with several white flowers (I remember) and broad leaves in the centre of it, but clear of them at

the sides, and of a water the most pellucid. Suddenly a very beautiful figure came from behind me, and stood between me and the fountain. I was amazed. I could not distinguish the sex, the form being youthful and the face toward the water, on which it was gazing and bending over its reflection, like another Hylas or Narcissus. It then stooped and adorned itself with a few of the simplest flowers, and seemed the fonder and tenderer of those which had borne the impression of its graceful feet; and, having done so, it turned round and looked upon me with an air of indifference and unconcern. The longer I fixed my eyes on her—for I now discovered it was a female—the more ardent I became and the more embarrassed. She perceived it, and smiled. Her eyes were large and serene; not very thoughtful as if perplexed, not very playful as if easily to be won; and her countenance was tinged with so delightful a colour, that it appeared an effluence from an irradiated cloud passing over it in the heavens. She gave me the idea, from her graceful attitude, that, although adapted to the perfection of activity, she felt rather an inclination for repose. I would have taken her hand: ‘You shall presently,’ said she: and never fell on mortal a diviner glance than on me. I told her so. She replied, ‘You speak well.’ I then fancied she was simple and weak, and fond of flattery, and began to flatter her. She turned her face away from me and answered nothing. I declared my excessive love: she went some paces off. I swore it was impossible for one who had ever seen her to live without her: she went several paces farther. ‘By the immortal gods!’ I cried, ‘you shall not leave me!’ She turned round and looked benignly; but shook her head. ‘You are another’s then! Say it! say it! utter the word once from your lips—and let me die!’ She smiled, more

melancholy than before, and replied, 'O Critobulus! I am indeed another's: I am a god's.' The air of the interior heavens seemed to pierce me as she spoke; and I trembled as impassioned men may tremble once. After a pause, 'I might have thought it!' cried I: 'why then come before me and torment me?' She began to play and trifle with me, as became her age (I fancied) rather than her engagement, and she placed my hand upon the flowers in her lap without a blush. The whole fountain would not at that moment have assuaged my thirst. The sound of the breezes and of the birds around us, even the sound of her own voice, were all confounded in my ear, as colours are in the fulness and intensity of light. She said many pleasing things to me, to the earlier and greater part of which I was insensible; but in the midst of those which I could hear and was listening to attentively, she began to pluck out the grey hairs from my head, and to tell me that the others too were of a hue not very agreeable. My heart sank within me. Presently there was hardly a limb or feature without its imperfection. 'Oh!' cried I in despair, 'you have been used to the gods; you must think so: but among men I do not believe I am considered as ill-made or unseemly.' She paid little attention to my words or my vexation; and when she had gone on with my defects for some time longer, in the same calm tone and with the same sweet countenance, she began to declare that she had much affection for me, and was desirous of inspiring it in return. I was about to answer her with rapture, when on a sudden, in her girlish humour, she stuck a thorn, wherewith she had been playing, into that part of the body which supports us when we sit. I know not whether it went deeper than she intended, but catching at it, I leaped up in shame and anger, and at the same moment felt something upon my shoulder. It was an

armlet inscribed with letters of bossy adamant, 'Jove to his daughter Truth.'

"She stood again before me at a distance, and said gracefully, 'Critobulus! I am too young and simple for you; but you will love me still, and not be made unhappy by it in the end. Farewell.'"

*Quinctus.* Excuse my interruption. I heard a few days ago a pleasant thing reported of Asinius Pollio: he said, at supper, your language is that of an Allobrox.

*Marcus.* After supper, I should rather think, and with Antonius. Asinius, urged by the strength of instinct, picks from amid the freshest herbage the dead dry stalk, and dozes and dreams about it where he cannot find it. Acquired, it is true, I have a certain portion of my knowledge, and consequently of my language, from the Allobroges: I cannot well point out the place—the walls of Romulus, the habitations of Janus and of Saturn, and the temple of Capitoline Jove, which the confessions I extorted from their ambassadors gave me in my consulate the means of saving, stand at too great a distance from this terrace.

*Quinctus.* Certainly you have much to look back upon, of what is most proper and efficacious to console you. Consciousness of desert protects the mind against obloquy, exalts it above calamity, and scatters into utter invisibility the shadowy fears of death. Nevertheless, O Marcus! to leave behind us our children, if indeed it will be permitted them to stay behind, is painful.

*Marcus.* Among the contingencies of life, it is that for which we ought to be best prepared, as the most regular and ordinary in the course of Nature. In dying, and leaving our friends, and saying, "I shall see you no more," which is thought by the generous man the painfullest thing



in the change he undergoes, we speak as if we shall continue to feel the same desire and want of seeing them—an inconsistency so common as never to have been noticed: and my remark, which you would think too trivial, startles by its novelty before it conciliates by its truth. We bequeath to our children a field illuminated by our glory and enriched by our example: a noble patrimony, and beyond the jurisdiction of prætor or proscriber. Nor indeed is our fall itself without its fruit to them: for violence is the cause why that is often called a calamity which is not, and repairs in some measure its injuries by exciting to commiseration and tenderness. The pleasure a man receives from his children resembles that which, with more propriety than any other, we may attribute to the Divinity: for to suppose that his chief satisfaction and delight should arise from the contemplation of what he has done or can do, is to place him on a level with a runner or a wrestler. The formation of a world, or of a thousand worlds, is as easy to him as the formation of an atom. Virtue and intellect are equally his production; yet he subjects them in no slight degree to our volition. His benevolence is gratified at seeing us conquer our wills and rise superior to our infirmities, and at tracing day after day a nearer resemblance in our moral features to his. We can derive no pleasure but from exertion; he can derive none from it: since exertion, as we understand the word, is incompatible with omnipotence.

*Quinctus.* Proceed, my brother! for in every depression of mind, in every excitement of feeling, my spirits are equalised by your discourse; and that which you said with too much brevity of our children soothes me greatly.

*Marcus.* I am persuaded of the truth in what I have

spoken ; and yet—ah, Quinctus ! there is a tear that Philosophy cannot dry, and a pang that will rise as we approach the gods.

Two things tend beyond all others, after philosophy, to inhibit and check our ruder passions as they grow and swell in us, and to keep our gentler in their proper play : and these two things are seasonable sorrow and inoffensive pleasure, each moderately indulged. Nay, there is also a pleasure—humble, it is true, but graceful and insinuating—which follows close upon our very sorrows, reconciles us to them gradually, and sometimes renders us at last undesirous altogether of abandoning them. If ever you have remembered the anniversary of some day whereon a dear friend was lost to you, tell me whether that anniversary was not purer and even calmer than the day before. The sorrow, if there should be any left, is soon absorbed, and full satisfaction takes place of it, while you perform a pious office to Friendship, required and appointed by the ordinances of Nature. When my Tulliola was torn away from me, a thousand plans were in readiness for immortalising her memory, and raising a monument up to the magnitude of my grief. The grief itself has done it : the tears I then shed over her assuaged it in me, and did everything that could be done for her, or hoped, or wished. I called upon Tulliola : Rome and the whole world heard me ; her glory was a part of mine, and mine of hers ; and when Eternity had received her at my hands, I wept no longer. The tenderness wherewith I mentioned and now mention her, though it suspends my voice, brings what consoles and comforts me : it is the milk and honey left at the sepulchre, and equally sweet (I hope) to the departed.

The gods who have given us our affections permit us surely the uses and the signs of them. Immoderate grief,

like everything else immoderate, is useless and pernicious ; but if we did not tolerate and endure it, if we did not prepare for it, meet it, commune with it, if we did not even cherish it in its season—much of what is best in our faculties, much of our tenderness, much of our generosity, much of our patriotism, much also of our genius, would be stifled and extinguished.

When I hear anyone call upon another to be manly and to restrain his tears, if they flow from the social and kind affections, I doubt the humanity and distrust the wisdom of the counsellor. Were he humane, he would be more inclined to pity and to sympathise than to lecture and reprove ; and were he wise, he would consider that tears are given us by Nature as a remedy to affliction, although, like other remedies, they should come to our relief in private. Philosophy, we may be told, would prevent the tears by turning away the sources of them, and by raising up a rampart against pain and sorrow. I am of opinion that philosophy, quite pure and totally abstracted from our appetites and passions, instead of serving us the better, would do us little or no good at all. We may receive so much light as not to see, and so much philosophy as to be worse than foolish. I have never had leisure to write all I could have written, on the subjects I began to meditate and discuss too late. And where, O Quinctus ! where are those men gone, whose approbation would have stimulated and cheered me in the course of them ? Little is entirely my own in the *Tusculan Disputations* ; for I went rather in search of what is useful than of what is specious, and sat down oftener to consult the wise than to argue with the ingenious. In order to determine what is fairly due to me, you will see, which you may easily, how large is the proportion of the impracticable, the visionary, the baseless in the

philosophers who have gone before me ; and how much of application and judgment, to say nothing of temper and patience, was requisite in making the selection. Aristoteles is the only one of the philosophers I am intimate with (except you extort from me to concede you Epicurus) who never is a dreamer or a trifler, and almost the only one whose language, varying with its theme, is yet always grave and concise, authoritative and stately, neither running into wild dithyrambics, nor stagnating in vapid luxuriance. I have not hesitated, on many occasions, to borrow largely from one who, in so many provinces, hath so much to lend. The whole of what I collected, and the whole of what I laid out from my own, is applicable to the purposes of our political, civil, and domestic state. And my eloquence, whatever (with Pollio's leave) it may be, would at least have sufficed me to elucidate and explore those ulterior tracts, which the Greeks have coasted negligently and left unsettled. Although I think I have done somewhat more than they, I am often dissatisfied with the scantiness of my store and the limit of my excursion. Every question has given me the subject of a new one, which has always been better treated than the preceding ; and, like Archimedes, whose tomb appears now before me as when I first discovered it at Syracuse, I could almost ask of my enemy time to solve my problem.

Quinctus ! Quinctus ! let us exult with joy : there is no enemy to be appeased or avoided. We are moving forward and without exertion, thither where we shall know all we wish to know ; and how greatly more than, whether in Tusculum or in Formiæ, in Rome or in Athens, we could ever hope to learn !

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